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Kent on Sunday

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Funding cut for homeless charity as users rocket during crisis

By Ed Hill
ed.hill@archant.co.uk

A LEADING homeless charity says referrals have rocketed by a staggering 93 per cent in 2011 as the impact of the economic doom and gloom forces people out of their homes and into facing a life on the streets.

To add to the growing sense of crisis, Canterbury-based Porchlight, which works across Kent and Medway, is facing a 75 per cent cut in funding from Kent County Council for next year.

The news comes as a stark reminder at this festive time of the immense challenges facing so many people, just to keep a roof over their heads.

Porchlight spokesman, Mark Parry, explains: "The economic situation has meant financial pressures on people have increased and in many cases become desperate to the point things have boiled over and family relationships have completely broken down.

"Add to that issues of mental health and drug or alcohol addiction and things quickly spiral out of control for many.

"The build-up to the point of rough sleeping can take months or years, but when it happens it is very quick."

In a recent survey the charity found 123 people sleeping rough on a typical night in Kent – but fear many more are without a permanent home and forced to spend nights sleeping on the floors of friends' homes.

It says the number of referals from social services and those making contact has risen by 93 per cent in 2011.

However, there was some good news for the charity, after it confirmed it is getting a £250,000 grant from central government to help prevent new rough sleepers spending a second night on the

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PICTURES OF THE YEAR

IMAGES: We showcase the photographs which captured 2011 across Kent – **SEE INSIDE**

COMMUNITY

Street Pastors on the march

REVELLERS in town centres who find themselves incapacitated by booze are being given a helping hand from a band of Good Samaritans. As the party season hits full swing, the Street Pastors have been hitting the streets helping people keep safe and diffusing tricky situations. **PAGE 5**

ENVIRONMENT

Mistletoe gets the kiss of life

SALES of mistletoe are soaring in supermarkets - but the number of orchards in Kent growing the plant are down almost 90 per cent since the 1950s. Now a new campaign has been launched to ensure shoppers urge stockists to ensure locally grown mistletoe is promoted. **PAGE 3**

GAMES

Video games expo planned

MARIO, Sonic and Donkey Kong are heading to Margate next year for the first in what organisers hope will be a major new event on the video game industry's calendar. GEEK 2012 will look at retro and modern gaming while reflecting on the town's arcade history. **PAGE 17**



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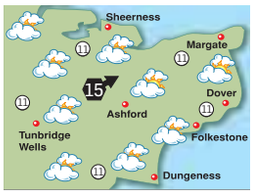
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TODAY: A mild and fine day with sunny spells. Moderate winds. Max temp 8-11C (46-52F). **TONIGHT:** Dry with some clear spells. Min temp 6-9C (43-48F).

TODAY'S HIGH TIDE (Metres)

Dover	11.06	6.7	23.31	6.7
Margate	–	–	12.03	4.8
St Mary's	04.41	5.8	17.06	5.6

WEEK AHEAD

Monday	Max 11C Min 5C
Tuesday	Max 11C Min 5C
Wednesday	Max 9C Min 3C
Thursday	Max 9C Min 3C
Friday	Max 9C Min 4C
Saturday	Max 10C Min 5C

Information supplied by MeteoGroup

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PUBLIC SPENDING

Fears of 'stress and sickness' for staff as council announces massive budget cut



SAVINGS NEEDED: County Hall announced a £100 million reduction in its budget

By Ed Hill
ed.hill@archant.co.uk

KENT County Council set a gloomy festive tone this week after revealing it plans to slash almost £100million off its annual budget for 2012/13 – a much higher figure than first expected.

And it means around 400 posts will be cut over the year, as part of the 1,500 set to be cut over the next four years.

Political opponents of the ruling Conservative group say the cuts will particularly hit young people, while piling additional stress and strain on those staff who do keep their jobs.

The details of the budget were revealed on Tuesday morning at County Hall.

The local authority says it is facing severe pressures from lower central government grants and increased spending on its services. It maintains it will manage its £2.2 billion budget by making efficiency savings which will not affect frontline services.

Around £38m will be saved by employing fewer staff, ending current contracts, managing buildings better and having fewer children come into care.

A £14m grant from central government will, however, mean council tax bills will not be raised.

The council has been hit by factors such as having to spend £22m on improving children's services after a damaging Ofsted report, spending £12m on vulnerable adults, supporting health improvements and inflation.

KCC leader Paul Carter said: "This budget will innovate and modernise the way frontline services are delivered and deliver substantial efficiencies.

"We have to be focused on the procurement of services that we buy from putting tarmac on the roads to putting together care packages for the elderly and vulnerable.

"We have to be very astute to insure we have sensible specifications and procure them in the right manner.

"We have to work with partnership organisations and the third sector, to pool a smaller resource in order to give totally coherent, joined up, public services with less money.

"We also have to be careful on how we manage demand, for example not putting children into care unnecessarily and the elderly into residential care if we can deliver good community support programmes to people in their own homes."

The council says despite the reductions it will still invest £723m in capital infrastructure over the next three years.

The money will be spent on schools and academies, public transport, social care and community facilities.

The council also has £40m from the Regional Growth Fund for projects, including the business park at the Pfizer site in Sandwich.

It will also be investing £20m in introducing superfast broadband around the county by 2014 and £34m on housing initiatives.

John Simmonds, cabinet member for finance, said: "We have had to look very closely at our budget for the next year. Additional pressures mean we have had to make more savings than were first anticipated.

"We have also had to take into account government grant changes and the general rise in prices. We have been prepared for this and with good planning we have once again found room to make efficiency savings and have made sure we are still protecting those frontline services needed by Kent residents."

Gordon Cowan for the Labour group in the council said: "This means even further cuts in services this year. The council are halving the budget in youth services for example, that must and will have an affect.

"In the finance department alone there are 100 jobs going. Either they have been living the life of luxury in the past or now they are going to be so pressurised that there will be stress and sickness."

Fears funding to support homeless people in the future will be hard to come by

Continued from front page

streets. It is one of 19 communities across the UK to get a grant from the No Second Night Out fund. This is designed to identify and locate those who are forced to sleep on the streets – and ensure they are found some form of accommodation before the following night.

Chris Coffey, strategic manager for outreach at Porchlight, said: "Porchlight will be working in partnership with the 13 local authorities in Kent and Medway to create a reactive outreach service which will be responsive to those who are new to sleeping on the streets, supporting the principles of No Second Night Out. We will also be seeking volunteers to help us deliver this service."

However, getting funding to support homeless people in the future looks increasingly difficult.

Mr Parry added: "The service that the £250,000 will deliver is distinct from our current rough sleeper service as it will focus on new rough sleepers and preventing them from spending a second night on the streets as opposed to entrenched rough sleepers – those who have been on the streets for a significant amount of time. As it stands our current rough sleeper service is still being reduced by 75 per cent.

"This grant runs from February 2012 for 12 months and we hope it will be successful in significantly reducing the number of rough sleepers in the county.

"Beyond that time we will continue to seek further funding to ensure we can sustain the level of rough sleeper support needed in the county."

■ For information about being a volunteer or to find out more about the services Porchlight offers, visit www.porchlight.org.uk.

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ENVIRONMENT

Save all your kisses for more sustainably-sourced mistletoe

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

MISTLETOE orchards have declined by almost 90 per cent across Kent since the 1950s – prompting a major new campaign designed to give the kiss of life to the traditional crop.

The National Trust and Natural England launched a bid two years ago to promote community-run orchards amid fears they would disappear from the UK's woodlands within 20 years.

Now it is urging anyone buying mistletoe to decorate their house over the festive season to ensure they are buying sustainably sourced home-grown mistletoe – and urging shoppers to ask sellers where the mistletoe has come from.

Peter Brash, National Trust ecologist, said: "Mistletoe is part of our Christmas heritage and has a special place in a wonderful winter landscape.

"It would be a sad loss if mistletoe disappeared all together from its heartland. We could end up relying on imports of mistletoe from mainland Europe for those festive kisses."

Meanwhile, Maidstone has been named in the top ten towns snapping up mistletoe in the UK according to supermarket giant Tesco.

Southend is top, but the county town is getting loved-up by finding itself in position nine in the top 10 around the nation.

Despite the decline in local production, Tesco says demand for the plant is already up 20 per cent on last year.

Tesco mistletoe buyer Shama Mehan said: "Kent folk have a great reputation for being real fun lovers and Maidstone with all its attractions is the county's most lively place. So it's not hard to see why mistletoe is so popular there.

"We started selling mistletoe in our stores two weeks ago and sales have been growing steadily since then. However sales will be boosted this week as it is the start of the Christmas party season."

Other high mistletoe sales have been recorded in Northampton, Blackpool, Coventry and Warrington.

Swansea is where all the non-kissers live – it comes bottom of the nation, along with Mansfield, Reading, Scunthorpe and Walsall.

While the origins of kissing under the mistletoe are uncertain, one of the earliest references to the custom was made by American author Washington Irving in his novel of 1820, The Sketch Book Of Geoffrey Crayon.

In it he wrote: "The mistletoe is still hung up in farm-houses and kitchens at Christmas, and the young men have the privilege of kissing the girls under it, plucking each time a berry from the bush. When the berries are all plucked the privilege ceases."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey and porridge

JUST under 1,300 people have been arrested by Kent Police in a festive crime crackdown against burglars, thieves, bail absconders and other criminals.

Since December 1, a total of 1,295 have been arrested and 760 charges have been made so far in one of the toughest onslaughts by officers across the county. Many of those arrested will now be spending Christmas behind bars. The arrests follow a series of special operations.

Rail fares shoot up

COMMUTERS discovered this week the extra cost of their rail tickets as the prices for 2012 are confirmed.

Southeastern said its fares were rising by an average of six per cent as of January 2. Its MD Charles Horton said: "Nobdy likes to see price rises, but over the last few years successive Governments have moved more of the cost of running the railways away from the taxpayer and towards the people who use rail services."

MP hits out at turbines

CANTERBURY MP Julian Brazier has called on the Government to block plans to extend the wind farm off the coast off Whitstable and Herne Bay, declaring he fears the coastline will be dominated by "rustling hulks".

He has written to energy minister Charles Hendry opposing plans for an extra 10-17 turbines, closer to the shore. He cites fears over a lack of a decommissioning programme.

CAMPAIGN

Christmas parties to prevent elderly from being left alone

A HOST of festive parties are to be staged after worrying new statistics revealed an increase in the number of elderly people in Kent preparing to spend Christams Day alone.

Statistics from Age UK revealed some 2,000 pensioners will be spending a lonely Christmas across the county.

Now the charity intends to plug the gap by holding a number of special events.

Lynda Rootes from Age UK in Maidstone said: "Families are now getting further away from each other, especially when children go out to find work. It's alright when parents are in their 50s but as they get older it may get harder for them to travel to where their families are. Also brothers and sisters often seem further away."

To help counter the problem the charity arranges parties either just before or after the big day itself for their clients. Some 12 day centres organised parties in the area between December 16 and 22.

Also, on Boxing Day a party is held at Brighter Futures in Maidstone with the help of Age UK minibuses if needed.

Mrs Rootes said: "We have entertainment and songs. We need to make sure we accommodate everyone's dietary needs for the dinners.

"It's important that people have a nice time. They all go home with a present. People always say how much they have enjoyed it."

The charity is also working hard to make sure older people make it safely through the winter. It is a chance for volunteers and visitors to check on people's health and wellbeing.

It comes as this newspaper continues to back the Surviving Winter campaign organised by the Kent Community Foundation. The scheme encourages over 60s who can afford it to donate their fuel allowance.

See www.kentcf.org.uk/surviving_winter.html to find out more.

CHARITY

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SAFETY

Samaritans easing the partygoers' route home

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AS town centres see a boom in revellers over the festive season, there is a force of good on the streets helping the inebriated and diffusing trouble.

But rather than the police, the teams are Street Pastors – Christians offering a shoulder to cry on, arranging a safe journey home and fulfilling the role of the Good Samaritan.

Kent Police this week heaped praise on their efforts and called for more to be working the streets in addition to the seven towns in which they already operate across the county.

Each Street Pastor, who has undergone a 50-hour training course costing £300, carries a special calling card with a host of numbers for support groups.

What's more, they are not permitted to discuss their faith – unless initiated by the person they are treating.

It is the brainchild of London-based Rev Les Issac, director of the Ascension Trust. He said Street Pastors is an inter-denominational Church response to urban problems, engaging with people on the streets to care, listen and talk.

Set up in 2003, it has spread across the country to towns which have reported a reduction in crime and violence when pastors are on patrol.

Anne Jenkins, coordinator for Gravesend, is the only paid member of staff in the town.

She said: "We talk to people, and sit with someone who is not well, either from drink or drugs, or another condition.

"If it's an emergency we call an ambulance. We offer water, or wrap them in a space blanket. We wait until a family member or friend comes to get them because often taxi drivers won't take them.

"Some people can become aggressive, but we are trained to walk away. However these incidents are rare."

Teams operate in Ashford, Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Gravesend, Medway, Sittingbourne and Canterbury.

Maidstone branch chairman Rev Jackie Cray said: "Recently one young girl was so drunk she could not walk properly and kept falling in the road, but didn't want help.





"Our patrol knew she was in trouble and kept picking her up out of the busy road to save her from any harm. They stayed back and only intervened to protect her from herself.

"We also get to talk to soldiers back from duty who are upset by the things they have seen. They just need to talk to someone who will listen. We provide a vital service."

Ashford coordinator Tom Pelham, minister for Ashford Baptist Church, added: "Our ethos is care, listen and help. We can offer first aid, water, blankets and flip flops for girls whose heels have snapped.

"If people ask 'what is a Street Pastor' then we tell them we are volunteers from local churches and that we are there to care, listen and help. So if people ask, we will tell them our beliefs, but that is not the first principle."

In Tunbridge Wells, Angela Bacon is leaving the paid coordinator's job to train as a Baptist minister.

She said: "Some may think it's not worth helping someone who has got themself too drunk. But often in that state you hear their problems and giving them an ear, and a confident 'hope it all works out for you' can really help.

"Sympathetic ears can be tough to find, especially at 3am on these very cold mornings."

Chief Inspector Lee Russell of Kent Police said: "Our cops think they are great. They are a real positive presence, and help reduce incidents of crime and disorder in our town centres. That allows our officers to deal with other calls."

FRIENDLY FACES: The Street Pastors in Gravesend, top, and Maidstone look out for people in need

CRIME

Cops probe 'extreme cruelty' after dog and sheep deaths

POLICE say they are staggered at the 'callous' slaughter of 15 sheep in a field which they believe were deliberately run over by a 4x4.

A farmer discovered the sheep dead in a field in Wrotham on Monday morning. Examination of their bodies suggested the injuries had been caused by a 4x4 vehicle striking them.

Police were called and those sheep that were not killed but seriously injured in the attack were put down.

The sheep were found in a field off the A20 London Road, opposite the Tower industrial estate. The field is owned by the St Cleres estate near Kemsing, although the sheep belong to a farmer from Sussex.

The gate to the field had been opened and tyre tracks were found on the ground. Significantly, police found part of a black moulded bumper bar which a serial number proves comes from a Mark I Landrover Discovery.

Neighbourhood policing team inspector, Adrian Allen, said: "If anyone knows someone with this type of vehicle that has sustained bumper damage or hears or knows anything that they think is relevant, they are urged to call the police. This is a terrible crime that has resulted in great pain, distress and suffering and it is difficult to imagine who could do such a callous thing. We are keen to establish a motive for this attack as quickly as possible."

■ Meanwhile, on the same day a Labrador dog was found dead in Mote Park, Maidstone with police describing its death as "an act of extreme cruelty". It had been deliberately killed.

Inspector Tristan Stevens said: "To cause such suffering to a defenceless animal is cowardly and callous and we are keen to ensure the person responsible for this is arrested."

Police are not linking the two incidents.

Anyone with information is asked to call Inspectors Allen or Sparkes on 101 or call Kent Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fake toys are seized

TRADING Standards officers in Medway have seized 38 fake look-a-like toys from a trader in Chatham featuring the trade marked images of children's favourites Thomas the Tank Engine and Roary, The Racing Car. The goods were seized amid fears they could easily be confused for the real thing by parents and grandparents buying gifts in the run up to Christmas. A full investigation is now under way and the toys are being tested.

Britpop band in church

THE Lightning Seeds have confirmed they will be performing in Ashford next year as part of their UK tour. The group who had a string of big hits during the 1990s and teamed up with comedians Frank Skinner and David Baddiel for football anthem Three Lions in 1996, will be performing at the new town centre St Mary's venue on February 21. The venue is a church which under went a refurbishment to allow it to become a performance space too.

Tunnel all set for 2012

A GIANT set of Olympic Rings has been unveiled on the entrance to the Channel Tunnel in France as the operator prepares to welcome thousands of sports fans into the UK for London 2012. The rings have been placed at the entrace of the tunnel in Coquelles, near Calais. During the Games next summer, visitors will be taken to St Pancras then jump on one of the high-speed Javelin services to Stratford.

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News

Our pick of the images

From festivals to royal visits, it has been a busy



SWIMMING, cycling and running proved the big tests at the Hever Castle Triathlon in June as only the fittest put themselves through their paces in pursuit of victory.



LOUNGE on the Farm in Canterbury was another big hit with the likes of Katy B (above) entertaining the crowds, along with Echo & The Bunnymen and Ellie Goulding. Pic: PAUL JERREAT



THE Turner Contemporary in Margate exceeded targets and received the royal seal of approval when the Queen came in November to pay a special visit. Pic: PAUL JERREAT



KENT's culture offering was considerably boosted this year when the multi-million pound new Marlowe Theatre was opened by Prince Edward in October. Pic: TIM STUBBINGS

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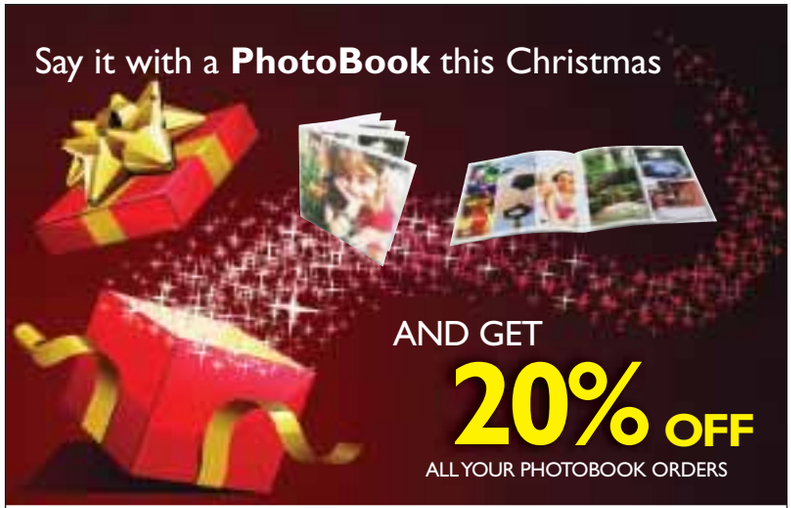
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which helped define the year in Kent

year across the county. We select some of our favourite photos of 2011



THE eyes of the sporting world fell on Sandwich in July as the Open returned and with it the cream of the world's players. Darren Clarke's emotional victory was the icing on the cake. Pic: ADY KERRY



RAPPER Vanilla Ice proved to be the surprise big name for panto season as Captain Hook in Chatham's production of Peter Pan and broke box office records. Pic: PAUL JERREAT



CANTERBURY celebrated local troops the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' freedom parade in May. The troops are based at the city Howe Barracks. Pic: PAUL JERREAT



COMMUNITIES united to celebrate the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton in April as roads were closed and street parties thrown - like this one in Tunbridge Wells. Pic: PAUL JERREAT



HE may be small, but he packed one hell of a punch as Prince was the surprise big-name headliner for Paddock Wood's Hop Farm Festival, stealing the show and the headlines.

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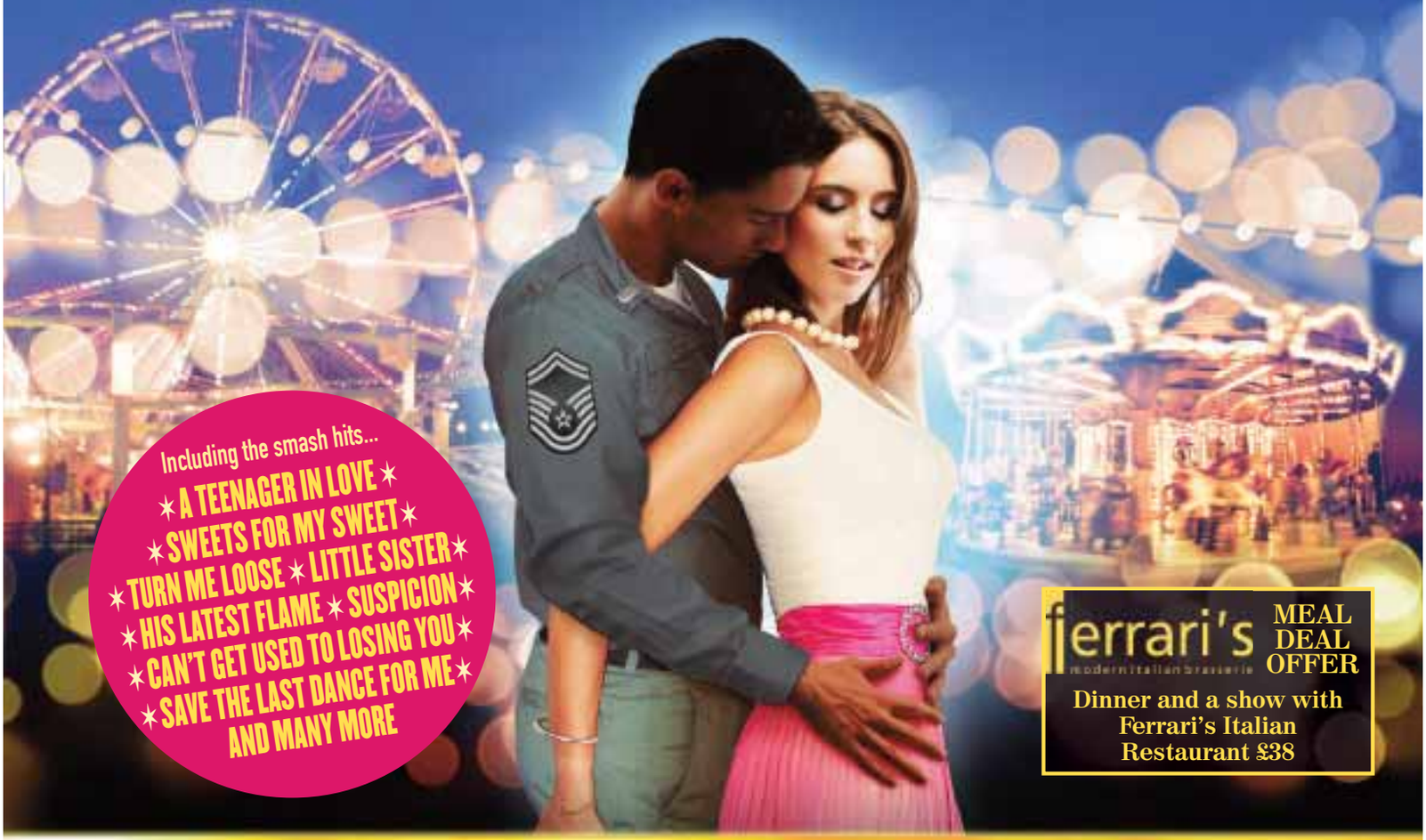
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CHARITY

Hospices bring hope in their darkest hour



CARING: Hospices offer a caring place for those in pain

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

ON A bitterly cold winter's day 21 years ago, Graham Perolls witnessed a young man die.

He saw the agony of his final hours suffering from cancer without the drugs we take for granted to ease the suffering.

It was a moment which would change his life. And one which, all these years later, still haunts and motivates him.

"He was moaning with pain," remembers Mr Perolls, now 61. "The doctor in the hospital said he wished he could do more but there was no morphine. I knew then that I must do something to help."

The hospital was in Brasov in Romania. The visit was in 1990, just months after Nicolae Ceaucescu's oppressive Communist regime had been toppled, and the people of Romania were suffering.

For Graham Perolls it was a moment he could not ignore.

Born and bred in Dartford and now living in Tunbridge Wells, in 1980 he had watched his father, Norman, slip away with a terminal illness, soon after the death of his mother, Ellen. Impressed with the palliative care his father had received, he set up a hospice charity, the Ellenor Foundation, dedicated to providing palliative care and to easing the suffering of those in the final stages of life. Today it is a multi-million pound operation which continues to provide a vital service across north Kent.

Yet it was his experience of Romania – developed through a love of the country after first visiting it some 36 years ago – which burned strong in his heart. This was fuelled with lasting friendships formed by a series of chance events during the mid-1970s.

He explained: "In 1975 a friend and I went on a week's holiday – we thought we were going to go to Spain or Portugal, but it ended up that the travel agent couldn't find us something for that week – so they said what about a week in Transylvania?

"We just thought it sounded like a bit of an adventure. On that first visit we got lost and had a chance meeting with someone who showed us back to the hotel and then invited us to meet their family. Our friendship started from there.

"I got married in 1984 and five years later I took my wife, we had three children by then, to visit. It was the January before the December revolution.

"That was when Romania was at its very worst. You could see people queuing for bread at 4am. It was a very desolate place, very cold.

"What I remember most was the Communists dancing the night away in a hotel at a ski resort which people in the town were almost starving."

But in December 1989 Ceaucescu was finally overthrown following the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Explains Mr Perolls: "I went back a few days after the revolution to see if my friends were okay – we'd seen pictures on the television of the orphans and the institutions. And because of my involvement in hospices I asked to see the facilities – which is when I saw that young man die in terrible pain.

"I wasn't thinking of starting a hospice – I thought it better to target the help rather than just send teddy bears. It started from there."

In 1991, the trustees of the Ellenor Foundation agreed to back an appeal to raise funds and a Romanian appeal was launched. It would be the forerunner of the present day charity, Hospices of Hope.

His ambition was to use his experience of hospice care to provide vital assistance to those suffering terminal illness.

Mr Perolls adds: "I knew I had people I could trust in Romania.

"We trained one of the first nurses, we had a Romanian charity shop in Bexley in 1992 and that was the first funding. But the need was so huge – we had people begging for help once they heard there was a team offering support that was free of charge.

"The hardest thing in the early days was having to turn so many people away."

From small acorns – a conference in Brasov to raise awareness of hospice care – things quickly grew.

Soon there were teams of experts providing care in hospitals and homes and in 1997 a centre was opened – named after Princess

Continued on page 11

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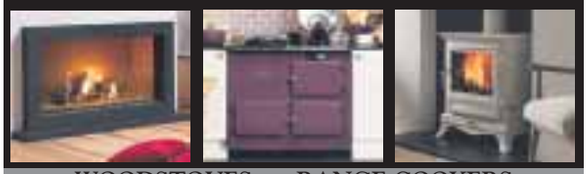
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News

CHARITY

Appeal hopes to build new site in Romania

Continued from page 9

Diana – which has gone on to train more than 12,000 doctors and nurses in hospice care.

Oliver Postgate, the late creator of Bagpuss, who lived in Kent. even donated a six-figure sum to fund a children's ward at its Brasov hospice.

Hospices of Hope is now the leading palliative care charity and training centre in south east Europe – helping an estimated 15,000 terminally ill children and adults.

In the UK, it has a chain of 17 charity shops – headquartered in Otford, near Sevenoaks – and two coffee shops, staffed by volunteers working to ease the situation in Romania.

And now, to mark the charity's 20th anniversary, it has launched a £750,000 appeal to build two new hospices in Romanian capital Bucharest.

Yet despite all the progress, despite all the improvements in Romania – it joined the European Union in 2007 – there are still significant social issues.



SUPPORT: Graham Perolls meets a patient at Pascani Hospice

"There have been a lot of changes since my first trip in 1975," reflects Mr Perolls today, "a small segment of society has got very wealthy – a middle class is starting to develop – but probably 40 per cent of people are extremely poor.

"We are raising awareness in Romania for people there to help, but it's very slow."

However the efforts to raise money show no sign of slowing. For Mr Perolls it has become a mission and one he intends to continue to promote.

He concludes: "It has been a huge privilege to transform people's lives. It has its difficult moments but overall it has been very rewarding."

■ **For more details see www.hospicesofhope.co.uk.**

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News

PARKING

Retailers welcome £1 Boxing Day charge for all town centre parking

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

SHOPPERS heading to the sales in Tunbridge Wells on Boxing Day have been handed an early Christmas present after council chiefs confirmed parking in the town centre would cost just £1 for the whole day.

Pay and display car parks across the town will be included, in a bid to boost traders' takings over the all-important festive season.

Council leader Bob Atwood said: "The decision has been taken not only as a gesture of support for local businesses, but also to encourage people to come to the town during the festive season.

"It's an opportunity not only to enjoy all the shopping facilities, but also, perhaps to make a day of it with a visit to the ice rink in Calverley Grounds."

Centre manager at Royal Victoria Place Laurie Barton Wright, who is also a member of the town's retailer steering group, welcomed the move.

She said: "We are really pleased the council is able to support the town centre businesses with a parking offer. It is a difficult time for the retail industry and we are working hard to try and keep trade in Tunbridge Wells – attracting shoppers into the town centre is really important and we know people think carefully about where to go shopping.



"Boxing Day is the first day of the sales so it's great to be able to offer an extra bonus for people to shop all day and only pay £1."

The parking fee applies to Monday, December 26 only.

The steering group, which is supported by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, was established as an opportunity for retailers to share information and work in collaboration to influence the future of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a retail destination.

Members include the Pantiles Traders' Association, Marks & Spencer, Fenwick, Topshop, Hall's Book Shop, Champneys Spa and the Assembly Hall Theatre.

Retailers who would like to attend the next steering group meeting can contact Laurie Barton Wright at Royal Victoria Place on 01892 506620 or email laurie.bartonwright@westfield-uk.com.

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News

COUNCIL

Optimistic outlook as town faces up to new challenges

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

SAVING Tunbridge Wells from the perceived "imminent destruction" of its town centre has been the crowning moment of 2011, according to council leader Bob Atwood.

The Conservative chief, who swept to power at the beginning of this year after former leader Roy Bullock was ousted by his own party members, sent an up-beat Christmas message to residents as he looked back over an eventful year.

He also pointed to key breakthroughs in some of the town's longest running sagas – among them the abandoned Morrisons and cinema sites, and the future of the Town Hall itself.

He said: "Perhaps the most important thing we have done so far is to reduce public concern over what was believed to be the imminent destruction of the town centre, and establish an independent panel drawn from many sections of Tunbridge Wells society.



MOVING FORWARD: The old cinema site is set for development

"They have been tasked with developing their own vision of how the town should progress over future years, in consultation with as many residents, traders, businesses and visitors as possible. I look forward with interest to the result.

"We have also managed to persuade Morrisons to put their shamefully vacant premises near the station back into use and have been promised this by next Easter. The planning application has been approved and Morrisons has said they will press ahead with work in the new year.

"This was closely followed by a change of ownership of the cinema site in the town centre. The council is currently processing an application for the demolition of the old cinema buildings.

"Hopefully a new development will commence on the site before too long. After 11 years blighting our town, it cannot be too soon."

Cllr Atwood concluded: "There are, of course, many challenges ahead, including severely reduced grant income from the government, and our ever present traffic problems, but I am confident we will be able to make progress with residents' continued support and encouragement."

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CRIME

Man wanted by police



POLICE have named Stephen Fahri, 29, as the man they want to speak to in connection with a hit and run in Southborough which left a police officer injured.

It follows an appeal on the BBC's Crimewatch which named Fahri on their most wanted list.

ROADS

Council trials controversial CCTV car in crackdown on illegal parking

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

COUNCIL chiefs are bracing themselves for a backlash after a Smart car equipped with CCTV was launched onto the streets in a bid to crackdown on motorists contravening parking regulations.

The car was unveiled in Tunbridge Wells last week, designed to complement existing CCTV systems and deliver hard and fast proof of those parking on double yellow lines, blocking bus lanes or causing a nuisance to other road users.

However, a similar scheme in Medway has repeatedly come under fire since it was first launched three and a half years ago.

Critics have pointed to it frequently catching out traders pausing to off-load into their premises or even breaking parking regulations itself.

Tunbridge Wells chiefs, however, will be hoping to avoid the pitfalls.

The council has the car on loan for a short time and will be assessing the effectiveness of the vehicle at the end of the trial period.

It has, so far, spent much of its time monitoring vehicles at Fiveways in the town centre where restrictions are in place which limit the times that most vehicles can use that section of road.

On one morning the Smart car monitored as many as 50 vehicles in one hour contravening the traffic regulation by going through the restricted zone.

The car has also been used near Capel school.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's planning and transportation portfolio holder, Brian Ransley, said: "The car is with us for a trial period. We will be looking to see what it can do rather than seeing it as an opportunity for enforcement at this time. Recently we began a road safety campaign with local school children.

"As a visible deterrent the CCTV car is a good way to get the safety message across to parents and motorists too as it can capture images of the cars parked on zig-zag lines near schools."

There is no cost to the borough council during the trial period.



MARKING TIME: Critics have attacked the use of the CCTV car in other areas but Tunbridge Wells council is seeing what it can do to help enforce the parking laws

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COMPUTER GAMES

Mario and his video pals to visit seaside for inaugural gaming expo

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A MAJOR video game exhibition is being planned for Kent next year – and if successful could become a major event on the annual technology calendar.

GEEK 2012, which stands for Game Expo East Kent, promises to showcase vintage consoles with the latest cutting-edge machines when it takes place over five days in Margate in February.

Machines from the past such as Spectrum, Commodore and Sega will line-up alongside the latest high-tech efforts from Nintendo, Sony and Microsoft, as well as a bank of networked PCs for multi-player action.

There will also be classic arcade and pinball machines from the 1970s up to the present day.

And in addition to catching a glimpse of the earliest outings by characters such as Sonic the Hedgehog, Mario and Donkey Kong, there will be more than 150 playable consoles and games.

It is being organised by staff at Marine Studios in Margate, with the main venue the Winter Gardens.

Director Kate Kneale said: "This is a pilot and we would love to see this become a major annual event. Margate is the natural home for a video gaming festival and expo.

"Despite the deprivation of the area in recent times its history is as a place to play; from the sideshow illusionists to the arcades on the seafront, playing is a serious business in Margate and in the 21st century that means video gaming.

Key to GEEK 2012 will be an exhibition focused on providing an access point into education and training in the industry.

This is still in the planning stage, but Ms Kneale said it will include a classroom exploring skills of the trade such as animation, plus keynote speakers from the industry exploring the future of the gaming market.

GEEK Fringe will take in venues across Thanet, from the Carlton Cinema where games will be played on the big screen, to the Tom Thumb Theatre, plus pubs and café events to include talks, screenings, quizzes and exhibitions.

■ Geek 2012 takes place over February 15-19. For more information see www.geek2012.co.uk.



POLICE

Water bombers fined after cops catch them on CCTV

TWO men who hurled water bombs at revellers in Folkestone last Friday night have been tracked down by police and fined.

Both admitted to throwing the bombs and admitted similar incidents in Folkestone and Deal. The men were stopped in a car in Marine Parade on Friday night after an earlier incident was spotted on CCTV. They were reported for public order offences and on Sunday issued with fixed penalty notices and £80 fines.

LIFE BOAT

Crews put in danger as boat launched after 'hoax'

MARGATE'S lifeboat crew are warning people not to let off flares irresponsibly near the shore after what they believe was a hoax last weekend.

The crew were called out just before midnight after coastguards at Dover received a number of reports of a red distress flare off the coast at Margate. The coastguard patrol found the cap of a red flare on the promenade near The Lido in Margate. They fear the person who let it off may have been doing it as a hoax.

CRASH

Chaos on M2 as crash closes carriageway

TRAFFIC jams stretched back more than six miles on the M2 on Monday after a morning rush-hour crash forced part of it to close.

A smash took place between the coastbound turn-off to Faversham at junction six and junction seven at Brenley Corner at around 7.35am, and forced police to divert traffic onto the A2. The road was finally reopened four hours later.

A woman who was trapped in her car was taken to hospital in a serious, but not life-threatening, condition. An investigation into the crash in under way.

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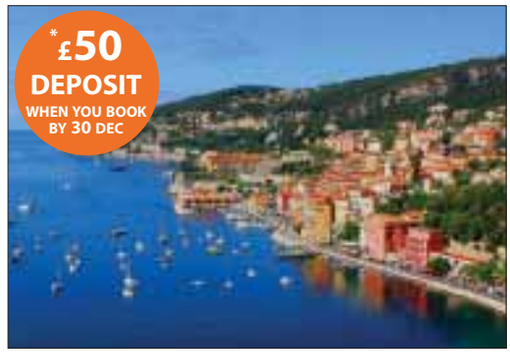
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For over 40s only

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Self drive, 2 nights, half board PLUS 99p Bar

Quote CO1-KOS

WAS £109pp

SALE PRICE £99pp

6, 13, 20, 27 Jan & 3 Feb, 2012



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Carry on New Year Party in London

4-star London International Hotel, London Docklands

Self drive, 2 nights half board PLUS 99p Bar

Quote LC1-KOS

WAS £119pp

SALE PRICE £109pp

January 2 to 4, 2012



Extend the New Year celebration at the 4-star Britannia London International Hotel, situated on the water's edge in London Docklands with superb views of the London skyline. You will enjoy dinner and breakfast each day, a 99p bar and entertainment both evenings. All bedrooms have an en suite bathroom, TV, hairdryer, and internet access.

INCLUDED:

- En-suite accommodation
- 99p bar from 7pm to 11pm both evenings for house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers
- 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts
- Entertainment
- Indoor pool & gym (£4pp per day payable at the hotel)

KENT **REMEMBERED**



Uncovering the isle's 'amphibian' ancestry

By Ed Hill
ed.hill@archant.co.uk

THE first book to tell the colourful history of Ramsgate harbour has just been published.

Author Michael Hunt said: "The last book about the harbour was written 25 years ago and concentrated on its construction. My book looks at the bigger picture. It's a whole history of the harbour from medieval times to the present day."

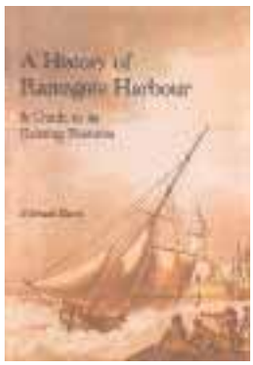
Mr Hunt began writing A History of Ramsgate Harbour & Guide to its Existing Features when curator of the former Ramsgate Maritime Museum.

He said: "It tells the story of the harbour right up to 2007, the aspirations, triumphs and failures of the harbour project and the people involved. The harbour has played an important role in British history. I've tried to give a sense of how significant that role has been, and explain the factors behind its development."

The book features the engineers and artisans involved in the harbour's construction, and the politicians and monarchs who influenced its development.

Mr Hunt said: "I've also described the vessels that used the harbour, together with some of their more notable passengers and cargoes.

"Its known from references that it was active as a harbour in Elizabethan times on a small scale. At that time it was just a small pier for fisherman. Fishing had been carried out in Thanet in conjunction with agriculture from very early times. In fact the people of Thanet were described as amphibian at the time.



COLOURFUL PAST: Michael Hunt's book tells the story of Ramsgate Harbour up to 2007

"It wasn't until the early part of the 18th century that the harbour as we know it had its beginnings. The admiralty and the merchant trade were looking for a harbour of refuge in the south east coast. The Channel is a rough piece of water and had its fair share of shipwrecks."

In 1748 a particularly bad storm showed how small ships that could shelter behind the existing pier could be protected from the weather.

Mr Hunt said: "There was a lot of toing and froing between Sandwich and Ramsgate about which port should be developed but in the end Ramsgate was chosen and plans were drawn up to build the harbour.

"Civil engineering in the sea was in it infancy and it was not until the 1770s that John Smeaton, who had built the Eddystone lighthouse, was employed to help build the harbour and make it a success."

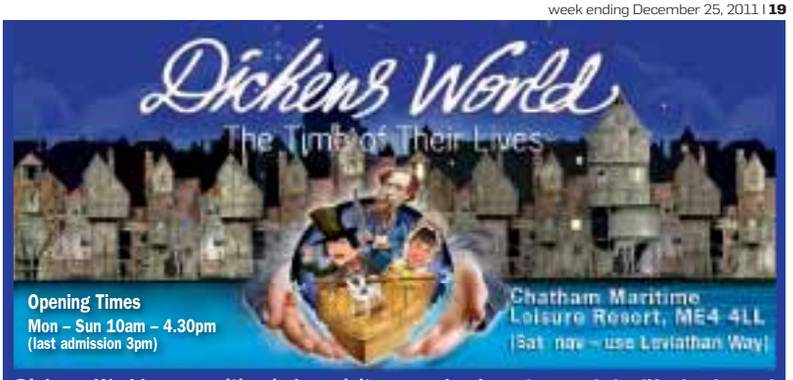
Smeaton built a cross wall; an innovation that he hoped would mean the harbour would never have to be dredged. The idea was the inner harbour, which is now a marina, would be a pool that would fill up at high tide. The water would then be let out through sluices to scour the harbour and keep it deep enough for ships. However, the idea was never a complete success.

Mr Hunt's book also explores Ramsgate's involvement with the Cinque Ports, the part the harbour played in both world wars and its long history as a cross-Channel port and the ferries that have taken passengers to Europe from its shores.

He said: "It is surprising how early cross-Channel routes began from Ramsgate. There was a packet ship crossing the Channel in the early 19th century, but because of its distance from London it has always lost out to Dover.

"I hope I've covered the life of the harbour in sufficient detail to interest history buff and general reader alike. The harbour is one of the historic and architectural gems of Kent. It's also the only harbour in the UK to bear the Royal appellation."

A History of Ramsgate Harbour is priced £9.99. It is available from Michael's Bookshop, in Ramsgate or visit www.MichaelsBookshop.com.



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Hugo 3D (U)
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Puss in Boots 3D (U)
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OPINION

Authority's lasting legacy

Chairman of the Kent Police Authority, Ann Barnes, reminds us how safe our county is, as the authority prepares itself for its final year

I JOINED the Kent Police Authority in 2001, and was elected as chairman in 2005.

I, and the other members of the community who serve on the police authority, do so because we are passionately committed to improving policing in Kent and holding the police force to account for what they do and how they do it. We do it because we know it is critically important.

We are also the independent public voice, taking a whole of Kent approach, talking to the public up and down the county about their experiences of and their priorities for what is, after all, their police force.

There has been considerable progress in policing in Kent too; Kent Police is one of the most successful police forces in the country, and as crime seems to be rising elsewhere it isn't in Kent. This is because the Chief Constable and his team have a relentless focus on pursuing criminals and keeping the streets safe.

We appointed the chief, Ian Learmonth, in July 2010 and the no-nonsense approach he brings has turned a good police force into a great one.

The context in Kent is a stark one of falling crime, rising public trust and confidence in the service the force delivers, and the delivery of every efficiency and savings target that central government have required of us. Our savings plan, which covers four years, is bang on target.

There will be elections in November 2012 for a single elected person to replace the police authority, and much of our work now is about ensuring a seamless transition to the new Police and Crime Commissioner.

When the Kent Police Authority closes our doors for the final time we will have left an impressive legacy for that person to build upon.

It has been interesting to see that some in local government have sought recently to criticise the work of the authority, whilst making no mention of either our success or that of the force.

One individual even complained that we were 'anonymous' and we couldn't effectively do our job.

That is not what the evidence says; it is not what the independent policing watchdog, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary has to say; it is not what we hear from the public when go out and speak to them (and we talked to over 2,500 Kent residents on our most recent consultation campaign).

We don't set out to dominate the airwaves or garner personal publicity for our own



Working together we can make policing in Kent better

ends. The actual business of policing is far too important for that.

We get on with the job. And we deliver, time and time again.

If you want to criticise our work you are welcome to. But do it on the facts, and do it in the interests of making policing better in Kent rather than for personal reasons.

Up until the election we will continue to work hard for Kent, and hold the force to account on your behalf.

We are always seeking to improve the service provided to the public, making policing both more efficient and more effective.

Give us your views, let us know how you think things can improve still further, tell us your experiences – good and bad. Working constructively together we make policing in Kent better.

KOS COMMENT

Why we must think long term on housing

IT is only right at Christmas that we should think of those who have slipped through the cracks in society.

According to the charity Porchlight, homeless figures have almost doubled in the last year in Kent. As a culture we are obsessed by the idea of owning our own home. Many people end up on the streets after unemployment and debt result in homes being repossessed by the banks.

Is the strain and pressure we put on ourselves to keep paying the mortgage worth it? We need more diversity in our housing supply and a return to long term rental agreements that give people stability instead of assured shorthold six month tenancies.

KCC feels the bite

KENT County Council says it faces tough financial challenges in the coming years. It hopes to increase income from its own moneymaking services to help pay for the increasing gap in its budget. Yet, surely the county council is just as vulnerable to the effects of a recession as any company operating in the free market?

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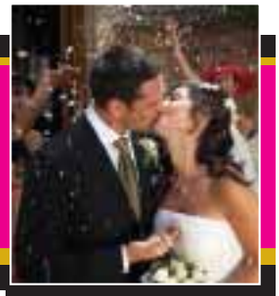


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Autumn in Sevenoaks by David Strydom

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Divided by a lack of policy

DOES Kent County Council leader Paul Carter purport to represent the whole county or only the bit east of Maidstone?

Like his predecessor, Sir Sandy Bruce Lockhart, he seems to see the debate on the siting of a future London airport as something that concerns only the east of the county. Meanwhile his 'western' party colleagues are obediently silent.

Sir Sandy fought to scrap the embargo – hard won by the smart-thinking West Sussex County Council in 1979 – on building a second runway at Gatwick before 2019.

Mr Carter wants to ignore the Gatwick expansion plans, and the fact the majority of Gatwick landings involve an approach at low levels over a substantial area of Kent.

Landing approaches over uninhabited water – as at other world airports – would be far more desirable than further expansion of Gatwick, planning flights to carry 30 million passengers by 2015.

Does Kent County Council have any countywide policy on aviation?

I recall they published an expensive glossy brochure on their environmental policy about 10 years ago – with not one word on air travel and air and noise pollution.

Bill McMillan, Cowden

Manston's not the answer, sir

I AM writing in reply to John Tice's letter 'The answer lies with Manston'.

Interestingly, the letter states the following comment: "take-off flight paths would be mostly over countryside".

However, I would like to point out that incoming flights are directly over the town of Ramsgate and several villages.

Any increases in air traffic in and out of Manston would blight the lives of thousands of people.

John Davison, Ramsgate

Think different for Kent's sake

JUST why do we need a new airport at all?

So what if we have to lose out on some business to those countries which have the space and facilities to expand their services?

We may have to come to the conclusion the south east is overloaded with houses and town centres, meaning we have to think differently.

Kent – or its coastline – is not the place for an airport.

To build one would simply devastate vast areas which are the very essence of what make this county special.

Yes, it would create lots of valuable jobs, but the long-term repercussions would mean we cease to be the Garden of England and end up being just another sprawling mass of metal and concrete.

Of course we can risk going down that path for short-term gain, but I suspect in 25 years future generations will wonder just what on earth we did to spoil such a beautiful county.

Mrs J Jones, Sittingbourne

Highway or Carter's way?

AM I the only one who remains mystified over Katherine Kerswell's departure from Kent County Council?

Not because of the pay-off involved – those in top positions do command high salaries and KCC must have agreed a severance pay structure when she was employed – but because of what her departure now means.

Paul Carter is clearly a man who wants to rule the county like no other. By watering down the role of the officers on the council, surely it simply means he becomes even more powerful. And given the council is dominated by the Conservatives, that means we must all face being even more true blue than ever before.

Which, given the amount of people who actually voted the Tories in for the last county elections, means we are being dominated now by a political body with apparently little influence from elected 'independent' officers.

K Smith, Canterbury

Fracking the last solution

IAN Taylor makes basic errors with regard to energy policy in his most recent letter (KoS, December 18).

First; the primary objective in any sensible energy policy is energy conservation.

Conservation and the pursuit of efficiency measures can reduce UK energy demand by 50-60 per cent according to some research bodies.

Since this is the cheapest way to deal with energy needs, it must take precedence over new forms of energy generation.

Second; given the history of hydraulic fracking in the United States and elsewhere, there is no rational reason to take an optimistic view of this technique. The bans on hydraulic fracking in France, South Africa and Switzerland are in place as reasonable precautionary measures that the UK should follow.

Thirdly; release of methane associated with fracking is a normal feature of this activity. This adds a potent greenhouse gas to our atmosphere. There is no reason to do this at all, given rising UK greenhouse gas emissions which need to be cut according to our own government and numerous scientific bodies.

Finally, we can meet all our energy needs by a combination of energy efficiency and renewable technologies as the Zero Carbon Britain reports have indicated. The available energy generation options are very varied and include: solar water heating, solar PV panels, ground source heat pumps, tidal and estuary mini-schemes and offshore wind turbines. We do not need to risk air or water pollution just to keep out of date polluting industries in business.

Steve Dawe, Kent Green Party

Remember a loved one

THIS Christmas, the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) is offering people the chance to remember loved ones lost to cancer with a Candle of Hope pin badge.

The gold brooch symbolically lights the way to a future free from cancer as money raised from its sale funds essential scientific and education cancer prevention programmes. The emblem is a reminder of a loved one

Scientists estimate that by making changes to the food we eat, increasing our amount of physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight about a third of the most common cancers could be prevented.

To support our Candle of Hope appeal and receive your badge, please make a donation at www.wcrf-uk.org/candle or call our team on Freephone 0800 970 1461.

Teresa Nightingale, general manager, WCRF

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Your business is our business

County strikes gold as venues scoop tourist-industry gongs

By Nick Ames
nick.ames@archant.co.uk

TEN Kent tourism businesses were acclaimed at the Beautiful South Awards For Excellence 2011 held at Denbies Wine Estate, Surrey.

The annual awards are now in their 21st year and recognise businesses and destinations across the tourism industry for their exceptional levels of customer service and dedication to raising standards.

A gold award in the Best Tourism Experience went to Port Lympne's Livingstone Lodge, which offers overnight accommodation above a waterhole and landscape where animals roam free.

The lodges re-create an African safari and the overnight stays include top-quality food and guides talking about their experiences of working in Africa on game reserves.

Bob O'Connor, managing director of Howletts and Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks, said: "It's an honour to win a gold award this year. It's a credit to all the staff who work so hard to make this such an exceptional product.

"Livingstone Lodge is very popular because it is so authentic – it's a window to Africa, a wonderful experience which underlines the importance of conservation.

"As you watch the wildebeest, rhino and giraffe wandering past the lodge you could imagine that you are in the heart of Africa."



TOP-NOTCH: The Historic Dockyard Chatham took Large Visitor Attraction Of The Year at the Beautiful South Awards

Top spot in the Large Visitor Attraction Of The Year went to The Historic Dockyard Chatham, with its warships of the past and displays of maritime heritage.

The Kent Conference Bureau received a silver award in the Business Tourism Category and both Thanet Visitor Information Centre and Gravesend Visitor Centre gained silver in the Tourist Information Service Of The Year award.

The Thanet team was also highly commended for customer service.

Kent Cycle Hire took silver in the Sports Tourism section, with Joss Bay Surf School highly commended.

Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre also received a highly-commended notification in the Flavour Of The South East category, while in the sections on accommodation Molland House in Sandwich and The Hayloft cottages in Chislet, near Canterbury, were given the same accolade.

"We offer our congratulations to all the winners", said John Williams, chairman of Tourism South East.

"Our industry's commitment to providing the best possible customer experience and to exceeding customer expectations is outstanding.

"The award-winners have shown that they are truly the best in class and we look forward to seeing them on the national stage at the Visit England Awards for Excellence 2012.

"The economic climate continues to present many challenges for the tourism industry – however, the standards achieved by our winners this year show their determination to provide their visitors and guests with memorable and outstanding experiences."

The South East is the most important region for tourism outside London and the industry is worth £12 billion a year to the local economy.

It also supports more than 300,000 jobs.

Invicta chamber expands its business into north Kent

KENT Invicta Chamber of Commerce is expanding its area of operation after the British Chambers of Commerce awarded it the accreditation for the north Kent area.

Since the end of the former Thames Gateway Chamber in January this year, which closed its operations because of lack of funds, Kent Invicta has been working on a low-key basis in Gravesham, Medway and Swale.

The chamber has now set up an office within the Old Town Hall in Gravesham and has employed a local membership representative, Louisa Felsted, to work with businesses.



The chief executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber, Jo James, inset, said: "We are delighted to be formally recognised as the official BCC Accredited Chamber for the Thames Gateway area.

"When accreditation is granted for a chamber to operate in a particular area, there is a process to go through.

"It was not automatic we would get north Kent. For instance, when Southampton's chamber closed, it was assumed Portsmouth would take over. In fact, Sussex Enterprise won the accreditation. But I wanted to keep north Kent in Kent. At Invicta we live and breathe business in the county and we are really looking forward to getting things moving in January.

"We look forward to actively working with local businesses to rebuild a chamber network that is of benefit to the business community. We will be looking to work with business to set up a local Economic Development Group (EDG) to ensure the voice of business is truly represented in all areas of economic development.

"We have successfully set up EDGs in the current areas that we operate, and they are an integral part of the representation framework, ensuring that the business voice is heard.

"Adding the Thames Gateway area to our existing areas of Ashford, Canterbury, Maidstone and the west Kent area offers real opportunities for us, for all our members and for the Kent business community."

Businesses can find out more about the chamber's plans and how they can get involved by phoning Louisa Felsted on 01474 550026 or emailing Louisa@kentinvictachamber.co.uk.

Taxman's error could mean happy Christmas for many

THE taxman has always been blamed for being quicker at taking your hard-earned cash than he is at handing it back – but there may be a Christmas present for some businesses this year.

Following recent news that HM Revenue & Customs has owned up to a huge raft of errors in personal tax calculations, another batch of refunds could soon be on its way to individual taxpayers.

However, business experts say don't hold your breath if you're a business that has erroneously overpaid PAYE and NIC.

The fact that HMRC recognises you have overpaid doesn't mean you'll necessarily get a speedy refund, according to Keith Utton, practice manager at Sidcup accountancy McBrides Accountants LLP.

Utton said: "You might well get one of those familiar little blue notifications soon after the end of the tax year if you have indeed made an overpayment – and if it's by £50 or £75, that probably means you didn't offset the online filing incentives against your PAYE payments.

"However, more worrying are the bigger errors – some of which can run to thousands of pounds and date back a number of years – which often slip through the net."

Even when overpayments are picked up, most employers are under the impression that any surplus indicated on the Employer End of Year Return (P35) will automatically be refunded.

But Utton says this is not so.

He said: "Unless you write and formally request a refund, nothing will happen. Even when you do write, it could be some time before you see a glimmer of your money on the horizon."

HMRC has admitted that processing correspondence can take up to three months and you will most likely receive a form quoting the P35 figures and total receipts in the year, with a request that you explain how the overpayment occurred.

Here is some helpful advice from accountancy McBrides:

- Firstly, ensure you pay the correct tax and NIC to HMRC each month. This may seem obvious, but not offsetting your recoverable Statutory Maternity Pay or Statutory Sick Pay is the most common error.
- Always keep detailed records of PAYE due and amounts paid to HMRC, with a monthly reconciliation.
- If you do discover an error during the year, increase or decrease your next payment to put things back into line.
- If you discover the error after the year end, submit your claim for a refund as soon as possible.

Keep Kent Working!
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Boosting potential by digging into the past

AN archaeologist from the firm behind Channel 4's Time Team digs paid a visit to MidKent College to help unearth the experts of tomorrow.

Wessex Archaeology project manager Mark Williams – a colleague of Time Team star Phil Harding – delivered the applied science department's inaugural Christmas lecture at the Medway campus before the end of term.

He spoke to staff and students about how scientists and archaeologists work together to explore the secrets of the past, using techniques such as carbon dating.

Mr Williams also provided an insight into some of the recent excavations carried out by Wessex Archaeology in Kent, including that of a medieval burial ground which was found at Springhead, near Gravesend, and a separate dig at Chatham Dockyard.

He told the students: "We produce stories about what happened in the past.

"We need to try to get as close to the truth as possible, so it's all about collecting the evidence."

Wessex Archaeology, which has an office in Rochester, has worked behind the scenes on Time Team since the popular Channel 4 show first began in 1994.

The firm is responsible for making sure all the programme's trenches are properly recorded and that a report is compiled at the end of a dig to present the results.

What is your business doing to help Keep Kent Working? Do you send employees on training courses to aid their personal development or run apprenticeship schemes? If you have a good news story email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or call us on 01303 817136.

Experts like Mr Williams also work closely with those professionals tasked with carrying out the site survey, the geophysical survey and the landscape survey, the results of which are all incorporated in the reports.

Pamla Walker, applied science lecturer at MidKent College, said: "We wanted to introduce students to something other than the lab and show them what other industries scientists can be involved in.

"For example, scientists are needed in archaeology to specialise in areas such as carbon dating and osteoarchaeology.

"There are so many options out there. for them"

MidKent College offers several qualifications in the field of applied science and houses a number of laboratories equipped to university degree standard.

The college also runs higher education courses in applied chemistry (Higher National Diploma) and life science laboratory technology and biomanufacturing (Foundation Degree).

The latter course is based at the Kent Science Resource Centre, at Kent Science Park, Sittingbourne.

Visit www.midkent.ac.uk for more information about these and other courses.



ASK THE EXPERT: The Time Team's Mark Williams on how science is about so much more than being hidden away in a lab

Building a career for our students

A LEADING Kent housebuilder is teaming up with a college to help construction students build a new career.

Ward Homes is teaming up with Bexley College in Belvedere, and to mark the start of the ongoing partnership, the developer is offering one student at the college an apprentice position at a new development, The Chase, in Longfield.

In addition to the apprenticeship, the firm will be working with the college to help students gain valuable experience and an insight into the construction industry through various projects.

Nick Fenton, managing director for Ward Homes, said: "At a time when young people need a helping hand into the world of work, we are pleased to be working with Bexley College and to offer one student a full-time position on site.

"Practical experience is crucial in construction and hopefully working with the college will give the students a head start in their chosen career."

Danny Rigdeway, principal of Bexley College, added: "Work experience and apprenticeships are fundamental for our students and opportunities like this will help more young people get into the world of work."

Royal support for the stonemasons

THE Prince of Wales has renewed his patronage of the Cathedrals' Workshop Fellowship.

Formed in 2006, the objectives of the CWF are to promote the training of stonemason apprenticeships in English cathedrals and beyond, in order to produce a mason who can think, plan and articulate the skills of masonry.

A spokesman said: "Everyone involved with the CWF is delighted and very grateful to His Royal Highness for the interest he has shown."

At Canterbury Cathedral, two stonemasonry apprentices enrolled on Level 4 of the CWF course, Jen Jordan and Sam Matthews, who has won two prestigious awards. It is hoped the cathedral's two younger stonemasonry apprentices, Lewis Bundock and Jake Wood will also progress onto the CWF course once they have completed their NVQ and City and Guilds Advanced Craft Certificate.

To find out more contact Brigadier Peter Lyddon by e-mailing peter.lyddon@btinternet.com or call 01347 811320.

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SC Support & Care Services Ltd

We provide a high quality person centred community support service to promote independent living and activities for people with various needs in West Kent and Medway

Team Co-ordinator REQUIRED: All aspects of day-to-day running in an office and of the staff team including rota cover, staff supervisions, annual appraisal and meetings.
On-call when needed. Computer literate, flexi working. Mileage and travel allowance given. Good rate of pay.

Essential: Management qualification in care and managerial experience working in the community or in a care home. Car and Mobile. Have worked with people with learning disabilities.

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THE SPENCER WING

The Spencer Wing is an independently owned and managed private hospital. We have a 4 bed unit at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford and a 22 bed unit situated on the QEQM Hospital site. The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancies for the following staff:

Physiotherapy Manager

Full time

To manage our Physiotherapy Department and maintain clinical skills with our in-patient and out-patient activity, primarily at Margate but across both sites.
Six or more years post graduate experience and previous management experience preferred.

Closing date for applications 20th January 2012

To discuss these opportunities or to arrange an informal visit, please contact
Lynn Orrin, Hospital Manager - 01843 234554

For job description and application form please contact:
Jo Edwards, East Kent Medical Services Ltd, The Spencer Wing, QEQM Hospital, Ramsgate Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4BG
Telephone: 01843 234556 Fax: 01843 296333
E-mail: jo.edwards@thespencerwing.com

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Ynez Coton
Advertising Director, Archant KOS Media
Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS
or email ynez.coton@archant.co.uk

ARCHANT KOS MEDIA

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We offer initial and on-going training to our volunteers. It is **FREE** with out of pocket expenses reimbursed. For giving just a few hours a week, you will get so much back!

The next course starts Tuesday 21st February 2012 and runs during school hours for 10 sessions (every Tuesday and Thursday).

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Nicholas James Care Homes Ltd
Unique Help

30 Station Road, Orpington
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Deputy Manager (Registered Nurse)
positions in the Canterbury area

Haydon-Mayer Nursing Home,

Harbledown Lodge Nursing Home

Experienced RGNs also required in both homes.

Dementia care experiences an advantage but not essential as training provided.

For an informal discussion please contact:
Eileen Laherty, Group Manager
Mobile: 07970051698

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We are seeking outstanding individuals to join our highly qualified, experienced and motivated teams, many of whom have come from industry. We offer our students the best learning and training experience and we have the following vacancy available:

SKILLS PRACTITIONER/CATERING TECHNICIAN

25 hours per week, 37 weeks worked a year

Salary: £9,198 - £10,869

Benefits include: Final salary contributory pension and 23 days paid holiday.

To provide Learning/Technical support to staff and students within the Division and to undertake assessment and quality assurance duties as required by the College and awarding bodies.

Closing date: 3 January 2012

Interview date: 16 January 2012

For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on 'Vacancies'. Alternatively contact the HR Office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application line for an application pack on (01843) 605052

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MIS MANAGER

37 hours per week, all year

Salary: £33,917 - £38,358

Benefits include: Final salary contributory pension and 36 days holiday.

The successful applicant will be required to:

- Work with the Director of MIS in support of the strategic direction of management information systems.
- Maintain and develop robust processes and procedures which both meet the requirements of internal users and ensure that returns to the funding agencies and other external bodies are timely and accurate.
- Provide a high level of service and support to all users of the College MIS, working closely with other members of the Registry Team and IT Services as required.
- Work across the College to ensure that there is integration, regulation and management of college MIS.
- Line manage the staff within the Registry Team.

Closing date: 3 January 2012

Interview Date: 12 January 2012

For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on 'Vacancies'. Alternatively contact the HR Office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application line for an application pack on (01843) 605052

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HIGHWAYS - District of Canterbury

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (BIFRONS HILL, BEKESBOURNE WITH PATRIXBOURNE) (40 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2011

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Notice is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL acting as the local authority and in exercise of their powers under sections 84 (1) and (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the said Act of 1984, hereby makes the following Order:

1. No person shall drive any motor vehicle at a speed exceeding 40 miles per hour on the lengths of road specified in the Schedule.
2. The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply for the interpretation of this Order as it applies for the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.
3. This Order shall come into operation on the 28th day of December 2011 and may be cited as "The Kent County Council (Bifrons Hill, Bekesbourne with Patrixbourne) (40 mph Speed Limit) Order 2011".

Schedule (40 mph Speed Limit)

Bifrons Hill, Bekesbourne with Patrixbourne	From a point 70 metres north west of the junction with Station Road to its junction with Town Hill and in Town Hill from its junction with Bifrons Hill to its junction with High Street, Bridge.

Full details are contained in the Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Sessions House, Maidstone ME14 1XQ,

between 8.30am and 5.00pm and at Canterbury City Council, Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury during normal opening times.

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or any of the provisions contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the relevant enabling Act or that any requirement of any such enabling Act or of any regulations made thereunder have not been complied with may within 6 weeks from the date on which the Order was made make application to the High Court for this purpose

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (CANTERBURY ROAD, HERNE) (50 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2011

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Notice is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL acting as the local authority and in exercise of their powers under sections 84 (1) and (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the said Act of 1984, hereby makes the following Order:

3. No person shall drive any motor vehicle at a speed exceeding 50 miles per hour on the lengths of road specified in the Schedule.
4. The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply for the interpretation of this Order as it applies for the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.
3. This Order shall come into operation on the 28th day of December 2011 and may be cited as "The Kent County Council (Canterbury Road, Herne) (50 mph Speed Limit) Order 2011".

Schedule (50 mph Speed Limit)

Canterbury Road, Herne	From a point 10 metres south of the junction with Bragg's Lane to appoint 270 metres north of the junction with Sweechgate.

Full details are contained in the Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Sessions House, Maidstone ME14 1XQ,

between 8.30am and 5.00pm and at Canterbury City Council, Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury during normal opening times.

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or any of the provisions contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the relevant enabling Act or that any requirement of any such enabling Act or of any regulations made thereunder have not been complied with may within 6 weeks from the date on which the Order was made make application to the High Court for this purpose

MILL LANE, BRIDGE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of works to provide a new electricity supply, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Mill Lane, Bridge, on or after 9 January 2012 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed in the vicinity of the junction with Western Avenue.

The alternative route is via Union Road, Saxon Road and Western Avenue.

STODMARSH ROAD, CANTERBURY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of repairs to a collapsed sewer, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Stodmarsh Road, Canterbury, on or after 9 January 2012 for an estimated period of up to 3 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed in the vicinity of 'Robins'

There will be no access for through traffic between the junctions with Littlebourne Road and Moat Lane.

The alternative route is via A257 Littlebourne Road, St Martin's Hill, Longport, Lower Chantry Lane, St George's Place, A28 Lower Bridge Street, Broad Street, Military Road, Tourtel Road, Sturry Road, Mill Road, Water Lane, Fordwich Road, King Street, High Street and Moat Lane.

Any vehicles over 6' 6" wide should use A257 Littlebourne Road, Canterbury Road, The Hill, Jubilee Road, Court Hill, Elbridge Hill and Stodmarsh Road, due to the width restriction at Fordwich.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS, BOYDEN GATE) (30 MPH SPEED LIMIT) (AMENDMENT NO 1) ORDER 2011

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Notice is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL acting as the local authority and in exercise of their powers under sections 84 (1) and (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the said Act of 1984, hereby makes the following Order:

1. "THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (Various Roads, Boyden Gate) (30mph Speed Limit) Order 2006" shall have effect as though:
2. The following items to be inserted in the First Schedule in the correct alphabetical sequence:
3. This Order may be cited as "THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (Various Roads, Boyden Gate) (30 mph Speed Limit) (Amendment No 1) Order 2011" and shall come into operation on the 28th day of December 2011.

Lengths of road in the Canterbury District in the County of Kent

Boyden Gate Hill	The existing item to be deleted and replaced with the following:
Boyden Gate Hill	From its junction with North Stream in a north-westerly direction to its junction with Highstead Lane.
Chapel Lane	From its junction with Highstead Lane for a distance of 100 metres in an easterly direction.
Church Lane	The existing item to be deleted and replaced with the following:
Church Lane	From its junction with North Stream to its junction with Chitty Lane.
Highstead Lane	From its junction with Boyden Gate Hill to a point 525 metres east of the junction of Highstead Lane and Ford Hill.

Full details are contained in the Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Sessions House, Maidstone ME14 1XQ,

between 8.30am and 5.00pm and at Canterbury City Council, Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury during normal opening times.

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or any of the provisions contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the relevant enabling Act or that any requirement of any such enabling Act or of any regulations made thereunder have not been complied with may within 6 weeks from the date on which the Order was made make application to the High Court for this purpose

HIGHWAYS - District of Dover

HAMILTON ROAD, DEAL & STATION ROAD, WALMER (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To enable Network Rail to carry out structural and safety inspections of railway bridges, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Hamilton Road, Deal & Station Road, Walmer, on or after 11 January 2012 as shown below.

HAMILTON ROAD, DEAL will be closed from Wednesday 11 January 2012 at 10.00 pm until Thursday 12 January 2012 at 6.00 am

The alternative route is via Mill Road, Park Avenue, Gilford Road, A258 Victoria Road, The Strand, Dover Road and Cornwall Road.

STATION ROAD, WALMER will be closed from Thursday 12 January 2012 at 10.00 pm until Friday 13 January 2012 at 6.00 am.

The alternative route is via Sydney Road, St Richard's Road, and Court Road.

Each road will be closed in the vicinity of the railway bridge.

NORTHBOURNE LANE, FINGLESHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of carriageway repairs, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Northbourne Lane, Finglesham, on or after 11 January 2012 for up to 2 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between Ham Lane and Finglesham Road.

The alternative route is via Ham Lane, West Street Farm Road and Northbourne Lane.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Maidstone

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (QUEEN ANNE ROAD, MAIDSTONE) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) (SUSPENSION OF ONE WAY ORDER) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Queen Anne Road outside of number 8 on or after Sunday 15th January 2012 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are complete. The One Way Order on Queen Anne Road between Brooks Place and Union Street will be suspended to allow for access.

The alternative route is via Brooks Place, Albion Place.

Southern Water Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary to replace manhole covers and frames. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Laura Carlisle on 01403 282848.

HIGHWAYS - District of Sevenoaks

ASHGROVE ROAD SEVENOAKS - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Ashgrove Road, Sevenoaks at its junction with Burntwood Road.

The Order will become effective on 09 January 2012 and will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence on 09 January 2012 and last 1 week. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Weald Road, Windmill Road, Oak Lane, Ashgrove Road.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate road excavation for a sewer connection.

CHART LANE, BRASTED (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Chart Lane, Brasted between Emmetts Road and A25 High Street.

The Order will become effective on 08 January 2012, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 09 January 2012 and last 4 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Emmetts Road, New Road, A25 High Street.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate electrical maintenance.

HARTFIELD ROAD, EDENBRIDGE (30MPH SPEED RESTRICTION) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic travelling at any speed greater than 30mph on Hartfield Road, Edenbridge between Lyden Lane and Hever Lane.

The Order will become effective on 9th January 2012, will be in operation and remain valid for use when required for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 6 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The purpose of the restriction is to create a safe working area.

HIGHWAYS - District of Shepway

MELON LANE, IVYCHURCH (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains relacement works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Melon Lane, Ivychurch, on or after 9 January 2012 for up to 5 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed for its entire length.

The alternative route is via Ashford Road and Newchurch Lane.

VARIOUS ROADS, FOLKESTONE (SANDGATE ROAD AREA) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of sewer repairs, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on various roads, Folkestone at their junctions with Sandgate Road, on or after 9 January 2012 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.

WESTBOURNE GARDENS

Both junctions with Sandgate Road will be closed from 9 January 2012 for up to 3 days

The east junction with Sandgate Road will remain closed on 12, 13 & 16 January

The alternative route is via Grimston Avenue and Westbourne Gardens

EARL'S AVENUE will be closed at the junction with Sandgate Road between 12 January and 20 January, except at the weekend.

The alternative route is via Sandgate Road, Castle Hill Avenue and Shorncliffe Road

TRINITY GARDENS will be closed at the junction with Sandgate Road from 23 January to 27 January

The alternative route is via Sandgate Road, Earl's Avenue and Bouverie Road West

HIGHWAYS - District of Swale

DUNKIRK ROAD SOUTH, BOUGHTON UNDER BLEAN (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of works to re-build a culvert, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Dunkirk Road South, Boughton under Blean, on or after 12 January 2012 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The closure will be in place between 8.00 am and 4.00 pm each day with the road re-opened outside these hours.

The road will be closed in the vicinity of Chrislocks Wood.

There will be no access for through traffic between the junctions with between Dunkirk Road South and Horselees Road.

For further information, please contact Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent County Council

The alternative route is via Woodsend Road and South Street (Horselees Road).

The One-way Traffic Order in respect of Woodsend Road will be suspended.

SOUTH STREET, QUEENBOROUGH
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains replacement works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on South Street, Queenborough, on or after 9 January 2012 for up to 8 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between West Street and High Street.

The alternative route is via West Street, North Road and High Street.

HIGHWAYS - District of Thanet & Dover

(OLD) A256 RAMSGATE ROAD, SANDWICH
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of works to complete surfacing and roadmarkings to tie in with the existing road, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on the (Old) A256 Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, as shown below.

The planned closure times are on the evenings of 13, 14 and 16 January 2012 from 8.00 pm until 6.00 am each night, with the road re-opened outside these hours.

The road will be closed from the new Ebbsfleet Roundabout near Richborough to the junction with Ebbsfleet Lane.

The alternative route is from Ebbsfleet Roundabout via the new A256 Richborough Way and new A299 Hengist Way to the Lord of the Manor Roundabout.

YORK STREET, BROADSTAIRS
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of electricity cable repairs, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on York Street, Broadstairs, on or after 9 January 2012 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with Charlotte Street and Chandos Road.

The alternative route is via Charlotte Street, High Street, Belvedere Road and Dundonald Road.

The One-way Traffic Order in respect of York Street will be suspended between the junctions with Chandos Road and Dundonald Road to allow access.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(A20 LONDON ROAD, AYLESFORD)
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC TURNING RIGHT)
TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic turning right into Hermitage Lane on or after Sunday 15th January 2012 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are complete.

The alternative route is via A20 London Road eastbound to the Coldharbour Roundabout and return westbound on A20 London Road.

KCC Highways apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary for carriageway patching. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Jez Massy on 08458 247 800.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(BASTED LANE, PLATT, PLOUGH HILL, PLAXTOL,
MILL LANE, BOROUGH GREEN)
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)
TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Basted Lane, Plough Hill, Mill Lane on or after Monday 9th January 2012 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are complete.

The alternative route is via Thong Lane, Quarry Hill Road, Maidstone Road, Crouch Lane, Long Mill Lane.

BT Openreach apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary for cabling works. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Mandy Richardson on 0370 0500792.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(MILL STREET, LEVEL CROSSING, SNODLAND)
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)
TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Mill Street at the level crossing on or after Wednesday 11th January 2012 between 22.30hrs and 06.30hrs for a period of up to 1 night or until such works are complete.

Network Rail apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary for tamping at the level crossing due to a track fault. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Emma Orsborne on 01924 372957.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(OLD HADLOW ROAD, TONBRIDGE)
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)
TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Old Hadlow Road outside 46 to Stair Road on or after Monday 9th January 2012 for a period of up to 5 weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route is via Old Hadlow Road, Cornwallis Avenue.

Southern Water Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary to upsize the existing sewer and rebuild a manhole. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Alan Skipper on 01273 663650.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(PILGRIMS WAY, AYLESFORD)
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)
TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Pilgrims Way on the eastbound carriageway of the dual carriageway from the start of dualing to Rochester Road on or after Sunday 15th January 2012 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are complete.

The alternative route is via Bull Lane, High Street, Rochester Road.

KCC Highways apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary for carriageway patching. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Jez Massy on 08458 247 800.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (SANDROCK ROAD & ST JAMES' ROAD, TUNBRIDGE WELLS)
(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) (SUSPENSION OF ONE WAY ORDER & NO RIGHT TURN RESTRICTION)
TEMPORARY ORDER 2012

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Sandrock Road between the junctions of Ferndale and Lansdowne Road and on St James' Road between Sandrock Road to Beulah Road on or after Monday 9th January 2012 for a period of up to 22 days or until such works are complete. The one way order on Beulah Road between St James' Road and Granville Road will be suspended and the no right turn restriction from Garden Road into Camden Road will be suspended whilst the works take place.

The alternative route is via Lansdowne Road, Garden Road, Camden Road, Albion Road, King George V Hill, Hilbert Road, Ferndale.

Southern Water Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary to install a new manhole and connections. Should you require any further information about these works please call Southern Water on 08458 278 0845.

John Burr
Director Kent Highways
Invicta House
County Hall,
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ **Dated 25th December 2011**

For further information, please contact
Kent County Council Highways and Transportation,
on 08458 247 800 (local rate)
or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent County Council

To place your notice here call the Kent Public Notice team on 01303 817044

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Including family announcements in partnership with the Kent registration service

To register Births, Marriages and Deaths contact the Kent registration service on 0845 824 7400

For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday 01303 817150

BIRTHS

BLIGHT
Ami and Simon Blight of Whitstable are pleased to announce the births of Sophie Alexandra and Alice Elizabeth on 25th November 2011. Two new sisters for Evelyn.

CHEESE / MACINNES
Charlotte and Duncan celebrate the birth of their son Jack James MacInnes on 15th November 2011, weighing 8lbs 13oz

HAWKES
Fabian James William born on 14th November 2011 weighing 7lb 2oz, Son to Alan and Jenette, Brother to Alisia.

MARTIN
Lee and Tani are proud to announce the birth of their beautiful baby daughter Zara Kaur Martin born 26th November 2011 at Darent Valley Hospital. A baby sister for Nathan xx

DEATHS

BOARD
Pat passed away 10th December 2011. Funeral on 21st december 2011 12.00 pm. St John The Baptist Church Church Road Sutton at Hone

BRUCE
Yvonne Vilma Veronica Bruce passed away peacefully on 4th December 2011. Funeral at Emmanuel Pentecostal Church, Dartford on 22nd December 2011 at 11.00am. Flowers to Levertons Funeral Service.

FINN
June Finn died peacefully on December 5th 2011, reunited with Wilf. Memorial service at St Lukes, Maidstone January 6th 2012 at 2pm.

SKINNER
John H Skinner of Ramsgate died peacefully on November 28th 2011. Funeral service at Thanet Crematorium at 12 pm on 15th December 2011

VINE
Ken Vine (Buffs) passed away 7th December 2011. A great dad and best mate and devoted Gampy to his grandaughter Anna. He shall be missed by all who met him.

PLANNING

Planning applications

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

Notice under Article 8 of the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995
Notice under Section 67 and/or Section 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Notice under Regulation 5 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990
Notice under Regulation 5A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the council:

CA//11/00343/FUL: 17A and 19 Hollow Street, Chislet, CT3 4DS Retention of No 19 Hollow Street as a non-residential communication respite centre and retention of No 17 Hollow Street as a farm shop, both with associated parking **Applicant: Gate Lodge Foundation** Reason: Conservation area.

CA//11/01848/FUL: Hatch Cottage, Church Lane, Chislet, CT3 4EB Conversion of garage to ancillary living accommodation and installation of dormer window in rear roof slope. **Applicant: Mr and Mrs Halfacre** Reason: Conservation area.

CA//11/01883/FUL: 37 Douglas Road, Herne Bay, CT6 6AF Single-storey side extension. **Applicant: Mr and Mrs Crow** Reason: Conservation area.

CA//11/01939/FUL: Heymar, Whitstable Road, Herne Bay, CT6 8BL Change of use of land to a touring caravan and camp site including the erection of associated buildings and formation of internal access road. **Applicant: Heymar Leisure** Reason: Major development.

CA//11/01941/LB: The Old Sessions House, Longport, Canterbury, CT1 1QU Replacement roof. **Applicant: Canterbury Christ Church** Reason: Work to a listed building.

CA//11/01956/FUL: Blean Village Hall, 2-4 School Lane, Blean Extension and alteration of village hall and provision of additional parking area. **Applicant: Blean Village Hall Management Committee** Reason: Conservation area.

CA//11/02051/FUL: 86 Regent Street, Whitstable, CT5 1JQ Replacement of timber sliding sash windows to front of dwelling to upvc. **Applicant: Mr B F Rigden** Reason: Conservation area.

CA//11/02075/TPO: Moat House, Rough Common Road, Rough Common, Harbledown, CT2 9DY Fell one Oak tree and reduce Ash tree subject of TPO No 4 of 1992. **Applicant: Mr T Abbott** Reason: Conservation area.

CA//11/02081/FUL: The Thatched Barn, Catt's Wood Road, Lower Hardres, CT4 5PG Porch to front of dwelling. **Applicant: Mr Blatchford** Reason: Affects the setting of a listed building.

Any representations should be sent in writing to the Head of Planning and Regeneration, Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury CT1 1YW or e-mailed to **development.control@canterbury.gov.uk** to arrive on or before **Monday 16 January 2012**.

The weekly list of applications can be viewed on our website at: **www.canterbury.gov.uk/dc**

Ian Brown, Head of Planning and Regeneration
Friday 23 December 2011

To place your notice here, call the Kent Public Notice team on

01303 817044

Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

11/03620/HOUSE **Little Crit Cranbrook Road, Benenden**
- Children's play den (retrospective) (LB)

11/03657/FUL **Unit 2 Hartley Dyke Business Centre, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst**
- Change of use from B1 (Kitchen showroom) to D1 (Day Care Centre) (LB)

11/03665/HOUSE **Wentworth Cottage Rye Road, Hawkhurst**
- Rearrangement internally including replacement of window with door on west elevation, and door with full height window on south elevation, removal of garage door and replacement with window, two conservation rooflights to rear (LB)

11/03667/LBC **Wentworth Cottage Rye Road, Hawkhurst**
- Listed Building Consent: Rearrangement internally including replacement of window with door on west elevation, and door with full height window on south elevation, removal of garage door and replacement with window, two conservation rooflights to rear (LB)

11/03683/HOUSE **Tuttys Sand Road, Lamberhurst**
- Demolition of existing side double garage, rear single-storey extension and front entrance porch; Construction of two-storey rear extension, side double garage with rooms over, front stair enclosure and side loggia (PROW) (CA)

11/03710/FULMJ **Notcutts Garden Centre Tonbridge Road, Pembury**
- Use of land for Pembury hospital staff parking for a temporary period (MAJOR)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of Way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by e-mail to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS
Dated: 24 December 2011

THE MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Town and Country Planning Act
Notice of Applications

MA/10/1391/S - 7- 8, ST HELENS COTTAGES, ST HELENS LANE, WEST FARLEIGH, MAIDSTONE, KENT, **ME15** 0JZ - Change of use of land from agriculture to a mixed use for a camp site, fishing and the keeping of horses. **Reason: 6**

MA/11/0880/S - MULLION COURT, LINTON HILL, LINTON, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 4AP - Erection of a two storey detached dwelling with detached garage outbuilding. **Reason: 2**

MA/11/1832/N - 4, OAK CROFT, BEARSTED, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME14 4GF - Erection of a part two storey part single storey rear/side extension and erection of a detached garage. **Reason: 2**

MA/11/2071/S - THE SOMERFIELD HOSPITAL, 63, LONDON ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME16 0DU - Planning application for alterations to the existing outbuilding to provide a permanent MRI facility, including new external doors, windows, flue and external freestanding ventilation condenser. **Reason: 1**

MA/11/2072/S - THE SOMERFIELD HOSPITAL, 63, LONDON ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME16 0DU - Listed Building consent for alterations to the existing outbuilding to provide a permanent MRI facility, including new external doors, windows, flue and external freestanding ventilation condenser. **Reason: 3**

MA/11/2078/S - 64, TONBRIDGE ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME16 8SE - Change of use of building from single dwellinghouse to house in multiple occupancy (maximum number of bedrooms 8). **Reason: 1**

Reasons for advertisement key:
1 - Applications affects the setting of a Listed Building.
2 - Application affects the setting of a Conservation Area.
3 - Application is for Listed Building Consent.
6 - Application is Major Development.

MAIDSTONE Borough Council

Copies of applications listed may be seen at Maidstone Gateway, Maidstone during office hours (Monday to Wednesday 8.30am to 5.30pm, Thursday 8.30am to 7pm, Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm). Any representations should be made in writing to me by no later than **8th January 2012**, quoting the application number.

Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ. **Dated:** 25th December 2011



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Inside every great dame there's a very funny man

SEE PAGE 31



STYLISH TRAVEL

Steam through the countryside with an all-day rover ticket

SEE PAGE 35

Kent Weekend

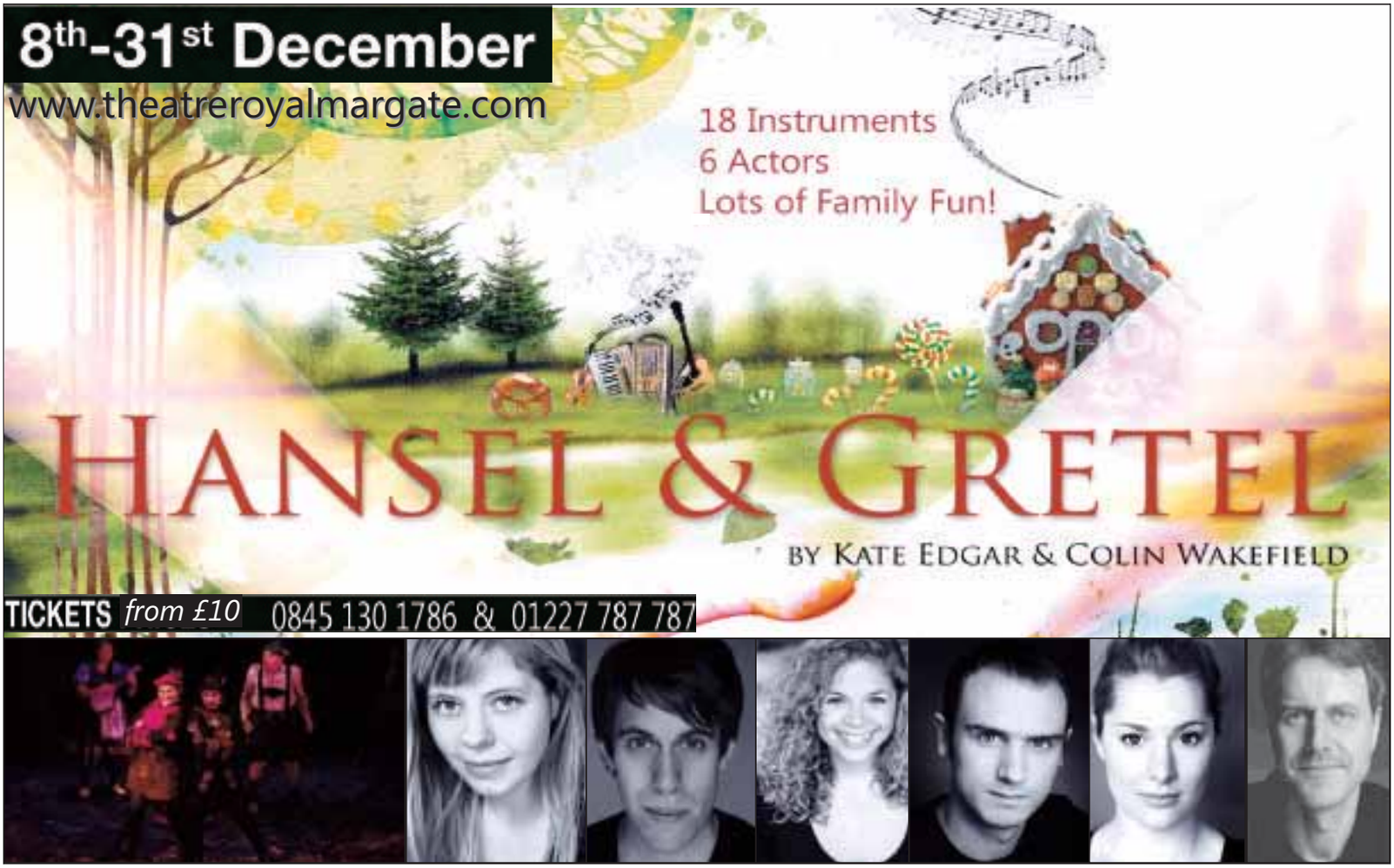


Tiger feat

Festive treats provide special challenge for the residents of Howletts

SEE PAGE 34

PLUS: Eatery serves up some old school 80s style - **food and drink p33** Making room for new homes is great fun for one former pupil - **property p38** Stylish Kia drives itself forward in the Mondeo sector - **driving p39**



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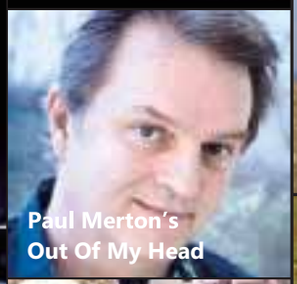


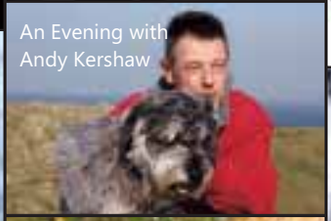












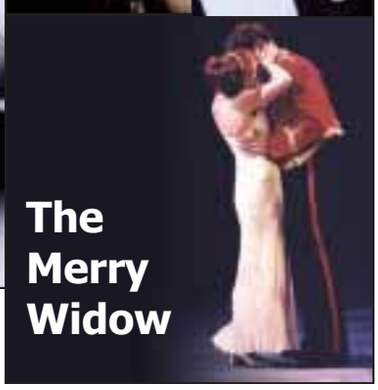












www.theatreroyalmargate.com
0845 130 1786

THE INTERVIEW

Charles Burden

There is nothing like a dame

Joe Bill finds out more about life as the big woman of pantomime

THE pantomime dame is a British institution in the same way that cups of tea and brown sauce on a bacon sandwich have ingrained themselves into our society.

In fact, men playing women dates back as far as Shakespearean times, when it was illegal for women to appear on stage.

There are many such dames who appear alongside fading celebrities in the back-end of nowhere, wishing that pantomime season would continue all year round. Very few of them are ever remembered.

But Charles Burden is not one of those. For more than 40 years, he has sauntered up and down theatre boards providing comedy, entertainment and festive magic to generations.

Burden is at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells for this winter's panto, Sleeping Beauty, flanking EastEnders' Glynis Barber, but for years he was part of a famous double act.

Alongside the late Maurice Moran, Charles Burden became showbusiness royalty, sharing stages with the legendary Morecambe and Wise, Arthur Askey, Jim Davidson, Ted Rogers and many more. But it was the true British panto that brought them to the stage and keeps Burden there four decades on.

He said: "As a traditional form of British theatre, I was always interested in pantomime. I became half of a double act called Burden & Moran for 35 years. We specialised as the Ugly Sisters for the pantomime season and continued doing so. The rest of the year we presented a comedy illusion act working clubs and theatres.

"I still love pantomime. Every year I look forward to the buzz while you're waiting for the curtain to rise... listening to the reaction of the children in the audience as the show starts and working out what costumes to wear."

Now the disclosure of age is a dame's prerogative, but in truth length of experience provides the best insight into a life on stage.

He said: "I always use the five Ps. Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance. I make sure everything is in the right place before the pantomime starts. Shoes, wigs, costumes all in order ready for the dresser. With 12 costume changes, you cannot make any mistakes.

"It's just like putting a suit on to go to the office, but a bit more glamorous than your average office-wear. The costumes are the tools of the trade and although they are outrageous, glamorous and downright silly, it all goes to make for the fun of the pantomime."



Sadly, Moran passed away in 1994, leaving his long-time stage partner to continue entertaining the public.

"My favourite pantomime memory has to be when I was doing Sisters with my stage partner at the famous City Varieties Theatre in Leeds," said Burden.

"Channel 4 decided to do a one-hour documentary about our career. It was great fun and we managed to do the whole hour in one take. That's unknown in television comedy.

"Every pantomime season brings with it lots of memories, places you visit and people you meet, and it's always nice to meet up with artists you've worked with before."

For someone who has done countless shows and played countless roles, Burden has a very clear opinion on which is the best character and who was best at playing it.

He said: "My favourite pantomime villain has to be Abanazar in Aladdin. Usually the baddie is completely over the top and gets to do his own thing. The dame and Abanazar get to do lots of business together, which adds to the fun. My choice of favourite actors playing baddies? Alfred Marks was one of the best Abanazars and Victor Spinetti the best King Rat."

Both pantomime and its audiences have transformed in the last 40 years, but Burden embraces the new technology and new jokes that are a part of modern stage performances.

He said: "Pantomime has changed over the years. When I first started, transformation scenes were the talking point of the show.

"The first-half finale would have four or five changes of scenery. Trapdoors were used, but a lot of modern theatres have omitted them from their designs, losing a bit of theatre magic."

But sets today still revolve and change before your eyes and create theatre magic.

"A lot of filmed projection is used, some of it in 3D. Another thing that has changed is the male principal boy, not as traditionally played by a long-legged girl, much to the disappointment of the daddies in the audience."

Burden plays Nanny Glucose in Sleeping Beauty and will be drawing on his wealth of experience to get the festive audiences firing.

He said: "Each pantomime has its own audience participation part. When I'm playing Widow Twankey, every time I sneeze, the audience shouts 'Use your hanky Twankey'. In Sleeping Beauty there is audience participation planned, but I'm not giving away any secrets."

• Sleeping Beauty is at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, until Tuesday, January 2. Tickets are available at www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or at the box office on 01892 530613.



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Sorry, not suitable for children.

To be included on this page, please email **features@kosmedia.co.uk**

Retro eatery is a nice place to dine but it won't get you into a twitter

RESTAURANT **REVIEW**

ONCE upon a time, there was a sleepy little seaside town whose eating-out options were straightforward.

There were the obligatory seafood outlets and a small helping of the other staple of English cuisine, the curry house. But then, over the last decade or so, its fortunes picked up and with an explosion of interest came a boom in eateries.

For Birdies it represented something of a challenge. A stalwart on the popular Harbour Street since the 1980s, it opted to remain steadfast in its offering, but having once arguably held the crown of the town's finest food outlet, it has been a little surpassed by the newcomers.

Yet, while the quality of food may have been eclipsed, it continues to fulfil a vital role. Not only is it the only place offering a touch of French cuisine, but the fact it is part of the fabric of the town means it carries more clout than most.

And it remains a compelling proposition in a crowded market. On a chilly Friday night it is a gloriously warm and welcoming venue, the background music drowned by the purr of chat.

The restaurant is something of a blast from the past compared with the new kids on the block, its walls lined with framed photographs and nick-nacks, a spirit bottle behind the bar shaped like the Eiffel Tower... Tables are tightly packed – too close in some cases – and the staff are swift.



The lighting is just right and the clientele's age perhaps says much. There's barely a person in there under the age of 40. It's not the place to be seen, but it offers a comfortable environment.

It's not designer gourmet – the portions are generous and some of the subtleties of taste are perhaps a little lacking. But you will emerge having been well fed and enjoyed that all-important 'good experience'; an ingredient so many eateries forget amid the pomp and ceremony.

However, there is scope for improvement – especially as the prices verge on the high.

The mussels starter (£5.25) in wine-and-cream sauce was nice – a word that sums up the food – yet lacked sparkle. The other starter was warm bacon and avocado (£5), a sprawling dish sat on a bed of salad. The bacon was packed with taste and crunch, but the avocado was a little hard and without that creamy taste of a riper fruit.

And while the main courses are a little expensive, lobster for £15 is far from extravagant, the portion generous and the sauce rich yet delicate. The chicken stuffed with prunes and in a mustard sauce (£14) was a touch over-cooked but remained moist and more than generous.

Dessert brought a crème brûlée that lacked the consistency of the best, while the crêpe suzette (both £4.95) was so sweet that it should have come with a warning for any visiting diabetics.

All of which makes it sound a little underwhelming. But food is only one part of the eating-out jigsaw and Birdies deserves a special place in Whitstable's hall of fame.

It's not cutting-edge, but then it doesn't pretend to be. Its food isn't stunning, but it is tasty.

A nice bottle of a New Zealand Sauv-ignon Blanc (£19.95) contributed to a total bill of £70 for two... a decent deal. Don't overlook it.

Chris Thomson

■ **Birdies, 41 Harbour Street, Whitstable CT5 1AH**
Telephone: 01227 265 337

FARMERS' MARKETS

HEADCORN: Now in it's fourth year, it opens every second Saturday from 9.30am to 12.30pm in the village hall, providing quality, local produce and locally-made goods.

BRIDGE: The market at the Red Lion pub, on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, gives shoppers the opportunity to buy high-quality, nutritious, fresh local food and drink.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS: Located in the historic Pantiles, this market revives the tradition of an open-air market held centuries ago on the first and third Saturdays between 9am and 2pm.

HYTHE: Established in March 2004, the farmers' market is now located in the Methodist church hall between Chapel Street and Prospect Road and is open on the second and fourth Saturdays, from 10am to noon.

GRAVESEND: The market in high street is open between 10am and 2pm on the second Friday of each month. It started in October 2007, supported by Gravesham Borough Council.

ELHAM: The market is held on the second and fourth Sundays of the month in the courtyard of the Rose And Crown pub, from 10am to noon. It offers a selection of locally-produced fruit and vegetables, eggs, cheese, meat, game, bread, cakes and pies, honey, jams and wine.

■ **For more information on farmers' markets around the county, visit www.farmersmarkets.org.uk**



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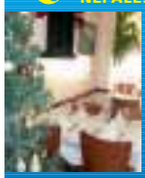
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KENT ATTRACTIONS

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Roxy Music and Squeeze legend
Paul holds key

The Orchard Theatre, Dartford
Saturday, January 12
01322 220000
www.orchardtheatre.co.uk

ONE of the most recognised names in the music business, Paul Carrack is heading back to Kent as part of his 2012 tour.
As a former member of both Squeeze and Roxy Music, Carrack rose to prominence as a top keyboard- and piano-player and was drafted in to write songs with a number of top bands.
His list of musical collaborations include Mike And The Mechanics, Genesis, Nick Lowe, The Pretenders, The Smiths, Eric Clapton, Elton John and The Eagles.
One of Carrack's most memorable songs was Tempted, which he performed during his time with Squeeze and still remains a firm favourite with the fans.

A cut above
UK stint for a Hair highlight

Churchill Theatre, Bromley
Tickets on sale now
08448 717620
www.ambassadortickets.com

FRESH from a sell-out European arena tour, the hit production of 60s musical Hair heads to Bromley next year.
The show features Pop Idol star Gareth Gates, singer Zoe Birkett and actress Amy Diamond.
Hair will be playing at the Churchill Theatre from Monday to Saturday, April 16-21.
Based in 1960s New York, Hair is based on a group of people coming together to fight for peace, love and freedom.
The show also has a highly recognisable soundtrack featuring such classic songs as Aquarius, Let The Sunshine In and the infectious title track, Hair.
Appearing recently as Marius in Les Misérables in the West End, Gates takes on the leading role of Claude, alongside fellow Pop Idol finalist Birkett.



The animal challenge
Tasty treats inside...

Howletts Wild Animal Park, Bekesbourne
Open from 10am-4pm
0844 8424647
www.aspinallfoundation.org

ANIMALS at Howletts Wild Animal Park got into the spirit of Christmas when they were treated to festive gifts filled with tasty treats.
Animal director Neil Spooner said: "Enrichment is an excellent way of keeping our animals alert and challenged.
"The presents were perfect as the animals had to work out how to retrieve the treats inside. Enrichment can be as simple as providing different sensory experiences such as textures and smells, feeding a variety of foods, or providing opportunities to climb or dig."
With Christmas approaching, the tigers and lion-tailed macaques were given presents stuffed with treats suitable for their diets.

The Beat goes on by the quay
Ska stompers

The East Quay, Whitstable
Friday, March 9
Tickets £15
www.whitlive.co.uk

SKA heavyweights, The Beat are the next big band to be announced for a gig at the East Quay in Whitstable.
Incredibly, it was The Beat's first album that spawned the hits Tears of a Clown, Mirror in The Bathroom despite a further three platinum selling albums.
The 2tone speicalists have built a fantastic live reputation across the world,having returned to the live stage in 2003 with a sell out at The Royal Festival Hall.
The Beat promises Whitlive a night of Ska classics and stomping. Tickets are £15 and available online from www.wegottickets.com, and from Gatefield Sounds, Whitstable and Gatefield Sounds, High Street, Herne Bay.















STAGE & ARTS

To be included on this page, please email **features@kosmedia.co.uk**

Think outside the box...

Art showcase

Maidstone TV Studios
Until Wednesday, February 29
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
www.francisknight.co.uk

A NEW gallery has opened at Maidstone TV studios, showcasing the work of regional artists.
Working in association with FrancisKnight, an independent contemporary arts practice based at the studios, the gallery will showcase a cross-section of established and emerging artists over a rolling three-month programme.
The first exhibition is Traces, by Cas Holmes, a local artist with a national reputation.
Geoff Miles, of Maidstone Studios, said: "We are delighted to be showing Cas Holmes's work. Her artwork has transformed the space and we are looking forward to a future programme of exhibitions working with FrancisKnight."
Holmes is trained in fine art and uses both painting and mixed-media textiles. See www.francisknight.co.uk.



Fans will be all shook up

Elvis tribute

The Orchard Theatre, Dartford
Friday, January 13
01322 220000
www.orchardtheatre.co.uk

LEE Memphis King presents the ultimate tribute to the king of rock'n'roll, Elvis Presley, celebrating the entire career of this musical legend.
The show will take you from the 1950s rock'n'roll heyday to Elvis's return to performing with the 68 comeback special to a rousing expo of Elvis's years performing in Vegas.
King is accompanied throughout by his top backing singers and orchestra, bringing the music of a legend back to life.
The show also features large-screen projection and has 10 years of experience behind it.
Prepare to be enthralled by an amazing musical journey and spend one more night with the closest thing to Elvis fans can get. Tickets are on sale now.



Traditional pantomime

Prince of Thieves lives

Memorial Theatre, Broadstairs
Saturday and Sunday, January 14-15
0845 2626263
info@sarahthorne-theatreclub.co.uk

MILLERS Amateur Dramatic Society explores one of our best-loved legends in this year's pantomime, Robin Hood.
This hysterically funny epic will have all you need to start New Year with a smile. A headless ghost, a panto cow and a talent contest are all included in this wacky pantomime written by director Rod Dexter.
Will the Sheriff of Nottingham succeed in his plan to kidnap Maid Marian? How many pies will Friar Tuck eat? Find out the answers to these questions with a very traditional stage show.
Performances are on Saturday, January 14, at 2.30pm and 7.30pm, and Sunday, January 15, at 2.30pm. Tickets are £7.50 adults, £5 children.

Travel in style

Classic steam-train journeys

Tenterden and Bodiam
December 28 to January 02
01580 765155
www.kesr.org.uk

THE Kent & East Sussex Railway in Tenterden is offering a great-value day out to visitors looking to hop aboard a nostalgic steam-train ride from Tenterden to Bodiam and back.
The all-day hop-on, hop-off Rover ticket allows unlimited travel along the full 10-mile antique railway.
Customers can stop off to explore at any station along the picturesque journey and take in some of the decorated high streets at each.
Tenterden Town station has a licensed restaurant and car-parking, while there are also special carriages for the disabled and elderly with wide aisles and ramped access meaning it is a great day out for the whole family.







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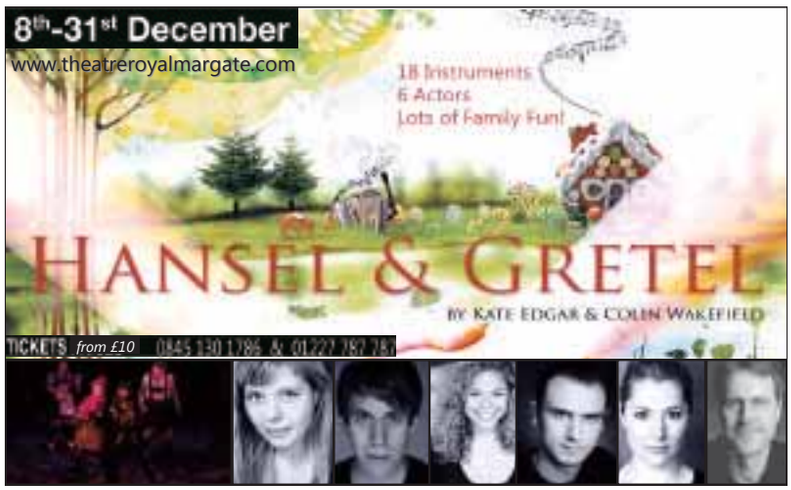
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EXHIBITIONS & **EVENTS**

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Will Young pops by
Songs in the forest

Bedgebury Pinetum, near Tunbridge Wells
Saturday, June 23, 2012
Phone 03000 680400
www.forestry.gov.uk/music

HOT off the back of a sold-out UK tour and No 1 album, Will Young has announced a tour of the nation's forests next year as part of Forestry Commission Live Music.
The singer will be playing Bedgebury Pinetum and Forest on Saturday, June 23.
In the 10 years since winning Pop Idol, Young has sold more than nine million records and crafted some of the deftest British music of his era. A succession of hits including Leave Right Now, Light My Fire, All Time Love and Changes from albums like From Now On, Friday's Child and Keep On has ensured a chart presence across the decade.
Tickets cost £35 and are on sale now.

Jimbo's back
Want to see a real legend?

Winter Gardens, Margate
01843 292795
www.margatewintergardens.co.uk

COMEDIAN Jim Davidson is hitting the road with his Legend Tour and tickets are on sale now for his gig at the Winter Gardens in Margate on Friday, May 4, next year.
The former Big Break and Generation Game presenter brings his show to Kent and is sure to be as uncompromising and near the knuckle as ever.
One of the UK's most recognisable stand-ups, Davidson has been at the centre of controversy with his appearances and comments on celebrity cheffing reality show Hell's Kitchen and is renowned for saying exactly what he wants when he wants.
Tickets cost £20, although an early-bird deal is available for £16 if tickets are bought before January 31, 2012.





Magic, laughs and sing-song
El Baldinho

Tom Tumb Theatre, Cliftonville
Mon to Wed, December 19-21
01843 221791

THE Magical El Baldiniho, fresh from his sold-out performances at the Canterbury Festival, makes a seasonal return to the Tom Thumb Theatre to perform six exclusive children's magic shows this Christmas.
El Baldiniho's Christmas Magic Show features Santa's missing elf, a busybody cleaner who hates Christmas and, of course, the handsome hero himself.
The one-hour shows, suitable for children of all ages, will feature his usual brand of magic and comedy, with Christmas sing-along, too.
El Baldiniho will be at the Tom Thumb Theatre at 2pm and 4pm on December 19, 20 and 21.
Tickets cost £3 for children and £5 adults; email tickets@tomthumbtheatre.co.uk.

Festive twist to city's tales
Spin on history

Canterbury Tales, Canterbury
Until Tuesday, January 3
01227 784600
www.canterburytales.co.uk

THE Wife of Bath is puckering up under the mistletoe as part of an alternative pilgrimage being offered at the Canterbury Tales visitor attraction this Christmas.
Visitors en route from the Tabard Inn in London to Canterbury to visit Thomas Becket's tomb will be challenged to complete a Christmas-themed word search using visual and audio clues located in the various Medieval streets.
Everyone who successfully completes the word search will receive a small tasty treat and be entered into a prize draw to win family tickets to The Canterbury Tales' five award-winning sister attractions, including Kent Life.
The Christmas Trail through the Canterbury Tales will run through the seasonal holiday until Tuesday, January 3.

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Troy Town names site after first constable

JONES Homes has acquired a residential development site in the heart of Rochester's Troy Town and is working on plans to create a collection of two-bedroom apartments and three- and four-bedroom houses.

The site, formerly occupied by the police, will be named Ruxton Square after Kent's first chief constable, John Henry Hay Ruxton.

Sara Stanhope, sales and marketing director for Jones Homes Southern, said: "We have already received numerous enquiries regarding this development. This site is ideally located within easy reach of Rochester high street and the homes will be built to our exacting standards."



Councillor flying high after demolishing his old school

By Nick Ames
nick.ames@archant.co.uk

JEREMY Kite, chairman of Longfield and New Barn Parish Council, was given an opportunity by developer Ward Homes that most people can only dream of – he took part in the demolition of his old school building on Main Road in Longfield.

A former pupil at Axton Chase School, Cllr Kite was helped to bulldoze one of the classrooms at his old school, which is being removed to make way for new homes.

Nearby Longfield Academy, opened in 2008, is a £25 million state-of-the-art secondary school and replaces the previous rundown school.

Ward Homes is expected to be launching the new homes at The Chase in the new year.

Cllr Kite said: "I thoroughly enjoyed knocking down part of my old school and wish to thank Ward Homes for allowing me to take part in the demolition. It must be any schoolboy's dream.

"Longfield Academy now has a brilliant new facility just down the road from the old site at the former Axton Chase School.

"It is great to see the rundown building demolished to make way for a fantastic new school and some much-needed new housing."

Ward Homes is recycling 95 per cent of the old materials from the school building and reusing it during the building process.

Much of the waste from the old school building will be used in the creation of new roads on the site or sorted and sent away to recycling centres.

Nick Fenton, managing director for Ward Homes, said: "We take our recycling policy very seriously and will make every effort to ensure that everything that can be re-used is.

"Even our site office here at The Chase is made from one of the former classrooms.

"We have worked closely with the community in Longfield over the last few years and were happy to accommodate Cllr Kite when he requested to be part of the old-school demolition."

On schedule to launch in the new year, the development on Main Road will comprise 104 four- and five-bedroom family homes.

Prices will start from £399,995.



TEAMWORK: Jeremy Kite and Ward Homes staff

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Volkswagen is moving on Up! with launch of its new baby



Lexus new-generation GS is all set to dominate its sector

Driving

carsforkent.co.uk



HIGH HOPES: Kia's new Optima has already won a raft of awards across the Atlantic

Kia aims to truly optimise style in the Mondeo sector

By Sam Davison
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

WE'VE heard it before: "Kia makes an assault on the Ford Mondeo sector", or words to that effect.

Sadly, the car picked to go to war was a generation too early – the final incarnation of the Magentis (2006-2010) was frumpy to look at, dull to drive and not particularly cost-effective for fleet operators once depreciation came into play.

But we now know that you can't keep this ambitious Korean marque down for long and, building on a succession of excellent new generation models like the Ceed and the latest Picanto, Rio and Sportage, an all-new Mondeo-basher arrives early in 2012.

And Kia has chosen a great name to replace the somewhat tarnished Magentis moniker – called the Optima, the new car both underlines high hopes Kia has for the car as well as what customers want to see.

It has already won design awards and been a success in the USA – which may be one reason why it is several months late arriving here.

Priced from around £19,000 and with Kia's unique seven-year/100,000-mile warranty, it will launch with a lively yet economical 134bhp 1.7-litre diesel, though a 168bhp 2.0-litre petrol is tipped to arrive in early summer.

The jury's out on whether UK drivers will later be offered the innovative petrol-electric hybrid that would be unique in its sector, being larger than the Toyota Prius or Honda Insight hybrids.

Like the latest version of the Sportage SUV, the Optima should sell well on looks. It's longer, sits lower and wider and looks far more stylish than most rivals – VW, for instance, made a mistake by simply warming over the previous Passat to create the latest model.

The Ford Mondeo itself is also starting to look long in the tooth, leaving the Vauxhall Insignia as the Kia's only credible mainstream rival on the styling front.

The sleek design is no accident; it takes time to design a car and to create a template for a range of models, but Kia's design chief Peter Schreyer – the man lauded for creating the original Audi TT – has now had time for his influence to show across the brand's revitalised line-up.

Kia interiors have also leapt in quality and design, as we will report soon in a road test of the Rio supermini.

KIA OPTIMA

Price: from £19,000-£25,000 (estimated)
Driving appeal: ★★★★
Image: ★★★★
Space: ★★★★
Value: ★★★★★
Running costs: n/a
Reliability: ★★★★★
How green?: ★★★★
Best rival: Vauxhall Insignia

More than just a makeover for popular Mazda3

THERE'S more than meets the eye about the revitalised Mazda3 now arriving in showrooms.

The Japanese marque's best seller (£14,995-23,395) has had some nips and tucks for sure – notably to the front end – but the real surgery is beneath the skin where a good driver's car has evolved into an excellent one.

Mazda says this has been achieved by revising underfloor reinforcement to boost rigidity, stability and composure, and cut road noise.

The dampers have also been tweaked to cope with increasingly poor UK road surfaces, benefiting both comfort and driving precision, with the steering system also getting an upgrade.

Combined, this makes the Mazda3 feel like a car from the class above, which has been the market perception for a while anyway despite the keen pricing. It even came first in the latest German JD Power customer satisfaction survey, beating that nation's own perceived quality champion, the VW Golf.

This appreciation can only get better as the Japanese marque pays more attention to cabin fixtures and fittings; facelift interior cosmetics include a higher quality dashboard with easier visibility.

With a strong claim to being Japan's sporting brand, Mazda has also extracted more from the new look Mazda3's powertrains and added an all-new and more sensible 1.6-litre petrol auto model – replacing a thirsty 2.0-litre.

The pick continues to be the 1.6-litre diesel though. A lightweight unit with 115PS/113bhp on tap, it blends decent performance with excellent economy and tax efficiency and has a smooth six-speed gearbox.

It makes it harder to laud the flagship 2.2-litre diesel – available with 185PS or 150PS – which feels heavier and less flexible, though its easy and economical motorway cruising will tempt high mileage users.



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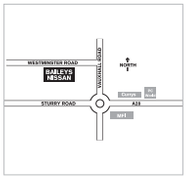
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MOTORING

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Move on Up!

By Sam Davison
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

VOLKSWAGEN is out to make city car motoring more fun and upmarket in the aptly named Up!

Arriving in January, the new city car (£7,995-11,180) has a wheel about as far as it will go into each corner, giving the Up! the biggest possible cabin within its 3,540mm long on-road footprint – it's 285mm shorter than VW's current baby, the Fox.

And while this necessitates a fairly boxy profile, the Up! looks anything but dull thanks to a front end that appears to deliver a cheeky grin, plus a pronounced upwards kick to the rear window line.

It will also be cheap to run with zero or low road tax, galactic mpg and piffling insurance ratings ranging from 1E to 2E.

But with VW's mainstream/premium position in the market, many would-be buyers won't see themselves as trading down to get into this all-new offering.

It certainly looks upmarket against its most obvious rival, the Hyundai i10, while it has youth on its side against the Toyota Aygo/Citroen C1 and Peugeot 106 sisterhood.



NIPPY: VW's Up! will be cheap and fun to run around the city



The toughest competition will probably come from the Fiat 500, which has assumed cult status, and closely related Ford Ka, with an in-house tussle also likely with the car's closely related VW group sisters, the Skoda Citigo and Seat Mii arriving later in 2012.

Power for the VW comes from a new generation three-cylinder 1.0-litre petrol engine, with outputs of 60PS (59bhp) and 75 PS (74bhp). The ultra-eco BlueMotion Technology version (£9,330) averages nearly 70mpg and emits just 96g/km to make it exempt from road tax.

The Up! is launching in three-door format, with a five-door due in the summer and trim levels will be Take Up!, Move Up! and High Up!

In addition, two special entry models are available at launch based on the High Up! – called the Up! White and Up! Black. You'll need to trade up to Move Up! (£8,970) if you want air con and electric front windows.

Latest GS will launch 'new face' for the stylish Lexus

JAPANESE premium brand Lexus launches its new generation GS model early next year, aiming to break German domination of the mid-size executive sector.

Priced from £32,000 with typically generous Lexus spec, it will target the BMW 5-Series, Audi A6 and Mercedes-Benz E-Class, boast a stylish new corporate look and, says Lexus, offer more driver enjoyment and feedback than before.

If it succeeds then this GS could be a breakthrough model for Lexus, adding driver satisfaction to the marque's undoubted quality and value.

The new GS has a wider stance than the current car to help improve handling, plus a more spacious interior, but virtually the same dimensions.

UK buyers can choose between the technologically-advanced GS 450h full petrol-electric hybrid or GS 250 petrol.

The new range takes a leaf out of Audi and Jaguar's books by making more use of aluminium to cut weight, and boost nimbleness and ride comfort.

The GS also has a more distinctive grille, set to become the 'new face' of the Lexus brand and there is even a new palette of colours designed to make the cars shimmer more and complement those sleeker lines.

Standard kit includes reversing camera, 10 airbags – including knee airbags for both driver and front passenger – enhanced Bluetooth connectivity for onboard phone use and the usual premium sound/vision system expected of the brand, with a 17-speaker Mark Levinson system also available.



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Official Government Test Environmental Data – Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): New Astra SRi hatchback: Urban: 28.5 (9.9) – 60.1 (4.7), Extra-urban: 49.6 (5.7) – 80.7 (3.5), Combined: 39.2 (7.2) – 72.4 (3.9). CO2 emissions 169 – 104g/km.

*Not available on Expression, ES, ES Tech models. **Finance Deposit Allowance not available on Astra GTC. Model shown is New Astra SRi 5dr. Finance provided by Vauxhall Finance, a trading style of GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff, CF15 7YT. Finance is subject to status, terms and conditions. Applicants must be 18 years or over. Offer applies to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only excluding B2B). All other customers are excluded. Offer available on orders or registrations before 19 December 2011. †Vauxhall Lifetime Warranty covers lifetime ownership of first registered keeper, 100,000 mile limit. Terms and conditions apply.

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Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the Škoda range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) – 68.9 (4.1), Extra Urban 36.2 (7.8) – 94.2 (3.0), Combined 27.7 (10.2) – 83.1 (3.4). CO2 emissions for the Škoda range 237 – 89g/km.

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ANITA 58, 5ft 3ins, auburn hair, green eyes, likes swimming, bowling, shows, holidays, walks, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387416**

KATH slim, petite size 10, hardworking attractive, OHAC, seeking loving romantic guy to enjoy cosy nights in cuddling up with a dvd and glass of wine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381729**

JULIE late 70's, petite, widowed, seeks gent with car and GSOH who loves animals. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379277**

TANYA 28, beautiful black single mum, very body confident and all out of love. Lonely and looking for good company with experienced respectful man. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381727**

HI genuine, fun to be with male? Nancy 39, attractive, discreet, lonely and in need of some much missed male attention. Call me **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381705**

IRENE looking for happy go lucky relationship with trustworthy male for romantic evenings in, quiet nights out, passionate weekends away and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381701**

KERRY 31 outgoing confident with laid back attitude, looking for relaxed relationship with tactile male, any age/looks/size or status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381697**

TARA 5ft big blue eyed babe with a cute smile looking for older sugar daddy who is not afraid to spend a little to live a lot! Good times always guaranteed. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381731**

JO bubbly, fun, red hair, green eyes, 5ft 5ins, likes nights out, dvds, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 374337**

LOVELY tall slim nurse, very caring and fun but missing that va-va-voom! Seeks adventurous male who's up for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 374159**

CHERYL young 54, attractive, petite, brunette, slim, likes most things, easygoing, looking for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380141**

MARIE solvent, independent, likes meals out, good things in life, GSOH, love pets/children, seeks honest, affectionate male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388574**

TRISHA teacher, blonde, attractive, uncomplicated, undemanding, non materialist well travelled, likes reading, walking, laughing, seeks tall, professional male, 60's for simple joys. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379891**

MARIA 47, curly blonde hair, 5ft 6ins, size 14, GSOH, likes reading, walks, WLTM kind, friendly, fun loving gent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380509**

SUSAN 53, 5ft 3ins, slim, likes cinema, theatre, meals out, looking for male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380317**

GWEN lovely dark haired, dark blue eyed slim sensual female with GSOH, WLTM male 35-50 for fun dates and romantic nights in together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380443**

DEBBIE dark haired passionate classy, discreet female looking for professional intelligent male wanting mutual companionship. Can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380441**

DEBORAH 38 missing that special someone in my life. Call me, even if you're not the one I guarantee we will still have loads of fun! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380439**

FEMALE 74, 5ft 1ins, artistic, versatile, seeks nice caring gent for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378465**

LADY late 50's, new to area, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378403**

WANNA spend Chrimbo with a big busty bimbo? Tracy separated and looking for Mr Fun! Come on you have to lose. Call me. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380009**

SHIRLEY young looking tall attractive fit female, OHAC, open-minded, varied interests seeks tall male for genuine dates. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380005**

BLACK female, 35, GSOH, caring, loving, kind, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376611**

CLAIRE 38 blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, curvy, looking for professional gent up to 50yrs LTR. Call me to meet up for a casual drink and chat. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380881**

FEMALE likes coast walks, shopping, gardening, countryside, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381463**

JACQUELINE 49, medium build, brown hair, likes animals, nights in/out, coastal walks, seeks male, 48-58 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381439**

JAYNE tall blonde, blue eyes, attractive, OHAC, no ties, enjoys nights out, romantic nights in, WLTM male up to 55yrs for fun times, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381365**

EMMIE 28yr old lonely single mum all out of love, looking for good company with male who can tame a confident beautiful sensual lady. Any looks. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381363**

NINA black beauty, classy 21, loves to have lots of fun, seeks older man who is willing to come up with a few new ideas for adult fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381361**

KATH 41 slim size 10, attractive and hardworking, likes cosy nights in/out, seeks cuddly romantic guy for tlc and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381339**

TANYA attractive, fit, slim, fun, all a hot blooded male wants! Now I have your attention, 37yr single female looking for the real deal. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381335**

CHRISTMAS special! Tia shy pretty female 39, seeks outgoing man to coax me out of my shell, for good times and old langsynes. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381333**

45YR old female, 5ft 5ins, brown hair, cuddly, curvaceous, love animals, music, sports, seeks kind, caring, sincere, mature male, 40 plus with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381319**

AUDREY recently widowed, seeks lonely gent for friendship and conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381213**

ALICE 30's female, slim, lovely smile, not that happy at the moment but hoping you might change that, you've nothing to loose? Call me. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379201**

LISA sexy blonde 31yrs, extremely fit and outgoing, seeking male for casual friendship with benefits. Discretion assured. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380879**

TRISH tall slim brunette, honest, reliable, affectionate, OHAC, no ties, outgoing, loves Indian food, seeking male 39-50yrs for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380877**

CAROL attractive lady of leisure, solvent, OHAC, WLTM sincere gent willing to entertain and share all of life's naughty indulgences with me. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380857**

TASHA 37, blonde tanned and very pretty, seeks well dressed older male with GSOH for fun meets, loving treats and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375605**

LESLIE 34yr old singleton, fun and vivacious looking for laughs/giggles with some great company. If you like the sound of me, pls call. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375579**

HELEN 34, lonely single mum of one, slim, attractive, tall, WLTM male for friendship maybe developing into something more later. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378007**

RACHEL blonde brown eyed slim but feminine female, 32, likes wining/dining, theatre, WLTM reliable male for diner dates and romancing. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377531**

CARMEL blonde brown eyed girl, employed with OHAC, likes meals out, walking, looking for loving relationship with caring down to earth male. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380001**

HANNAH 34 slim petite green eyed single mum with many interest, seeking discreet older male for mutual companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379977**

SAM 35, green eyed voluptuous, busty, loves football, theatre, travel, red wine, WLTM older male up to 65yrs for sensual relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379975**

MEL tall curvy attractive blonde, loves cosy nights in with a good bottle of wine, looking for some male attention and company. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379971**

LOOKING for a nice soul mate, dinners, drinks, walks, someone who enjoys life, I am optimistic, happy, fun, cuddly, slim, red hair, enjoy good food, working out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379865**

YOUNG free single female, seeks male for nights in/out, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388484**

LIDDY 28yr old genuine kind hearted girl looking for older male, 34-46yrs who can replace the other half of me that's missing. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375157**

ALICIA attractive petite female 22yrs, new to dating scene and area, loves nights in/out, WLTM male for adult fun. ACA. can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375135**

FOLKESTONE lady 57, likes animals, walks, drinks, good food, passionate, seeks likeminded male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375927**

SUSIE seeking tall honest guy for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375883**

CHRIS new to area, late 50's, slim, 5ft 5ins, fair hair, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378725**

FULL time vacancy arisen for open minded male seeking uncomplicated relationship with slim professional 39yr old female with wicked sense of humour. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 374157**

LYN 58, likes meals out, cinema, holidays, coast, theatre, shows, countryside, pubs, N/S, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376187**

CARRIE 28yr old Christmas cracker, seeking easygoing confident character to pull me! ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380855**

SUE long blonde haired slim but curvy pretty female, loves to live life to the full, good wine, shopping, seeking genuine male 48-60yrs for adult friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380853**

I don't wanna be alone and unattached for another Xmas! Bev, attractive, big hearted, many interests, seeks male willing to take an interest in me! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376593**

KAZ 32yr old intellectual mixed race female, likes gym, meals in/out, seeks reliable, honest male, 38-58yrs to get to know for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376591**

NATALIE blonde blue eyed nurse, 39yrs medium build, no ties, life is good but I'm missing someone to love and lust after. Can you help? **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376589**

DONNA 26yrs, blue eyes, blonde, bored of spending nights in alone, looking for average looking male, 23-55yrs for TLC. Dads welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376563**

PROFESSIONAL female, late 30's, own business, seeks honest male for serious relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388370**

JULIE attractive slim blonde blue eyed beauty, fit with GSOH, professional OHAC, WLTM male for travel, good food/wine and mutual over indulgences. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379007**

DIANE successful feisty business women, confident, fun, chatty, positive, social with everything but that special someone in her life and WLTM him. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379203**

LIBBY 36, newly single, no hangups, WLTM outgoing male to wine/dine and forever be mine. Don't miss out! Call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375607**

REBECCA brown hair/eyes, medium build, shy, likes animals, N/S, likes cosy nights in, walks, gardening, cuddles, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375995**

JACQUELINE 48, medium build, likes nights in/out, seeks male, 40-58 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 370747**

BEVERLEY 33, blonde hair, blue eyes, seeks male, 40-45 for walks, karaoke and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375217**

ELIZABETH independent, no ties, solvent, fit and healthy, looking for similar passionate male, any age/looks for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375161**

SANDRA green eyed slim brunette, loves to keep fit, very competitive, seeks reliable mature male who can look after me and be loved in return. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375159**

TALL slim, blonde female, kind, caring, honest, seeks older male, 78 plus to treat me well. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378233**

LIFE is too short to live it alone! Eve, attractive blonde blue eyed bubbly lady looking for similar genuine tactile person for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378011**

TAMMY young 31yr old good looking brunette with no ties, seeking fun romantic guy for meals out, cosy nights in and more. No time wasters pls. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 378009**

PAT 70's, 5ft, cuddly, seeks male for friendship and days out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369521**

JACKIE 48, 5ft 3ins, medium build, likes animals, nights in/out, walks, seeks male, 48-58 for friendship, maybe more, preferably a smoker. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 368039**

STUNNING blonde nurse, 32, funny and romantic, WLTM uncomplicated, reliable male, 50-65yrs for companionship and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369221**

AMANDA cuddly 36yr old easygoing caring lonely female just looking for love with nice guy, 30-55yrs. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375133**

SASHA 28yr old beautiful surfer babe looking for fun initially, maybe more with fit confident male who can handle me. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375131**

LIFE begins at 40! Pam outgoing athletic brunette, tall, slender and attractive, WLTM older male with big personality for lots of fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 374155**

ELIZABETH caring, honest, reliable, likes most things, seeks older gent, late 70's for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359589**

CLAIRE Gorgeous fun loving brunette, 29, 5ft 4ins, employed, OHAC, looking for manly male up to 45yrs for no strings good times and fine wine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 373107**

SINGLE 50 plus female, seeks male who likes talks, walks, dining and dancing. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 364975**

LADY seeks N/S, clean shaven male to appreciate artistic, romantic, feisty, attractive, slimmish, curvy lady of 69 who has not yet joined the wrinklies. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 349757**

SOCIABLE cuddly 70's lady, GSOH, N/S, likes cinema, days out, coast, seeks genuine male for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369297**

I'M Gorgeous, lively seeking a similar professional who thinks he can handle me, good times guaranteed. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369223**

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JANE passionate lady seeking unconventional young at heart male 35-50 for free spirited, open-minded fun and new experiences. Single dads welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 375611**

GENUINE honest, curvy lady modern, smart, friendly, seeking genuine gent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376275**

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243**

SLIM attractive, elegant female, likes travel, restaurants, cinema, seeks caring, male, 45-55 for friendship, possible relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361571**

BARBARA 46, seeks nice, stocky male up to 50 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361701**

HI I'm Louise, an easygoing sensual slim blonde looking for someone to have fun with initially maybe more later. Call me. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 373009**

ATTRACTIVE and any man's dream seeks, outgoing, professional male for evenings in and fun nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 366703**

CUTE very curvy young girl, 18, WLTM romantic guy for lots of fun and loving. Looks/status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 366699**

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PAUL brown hair, blue/green eyes, 45, professional, slim, fit, seeks attractive female, 35-50 for walks, nights in, cooking. Looking for soul mate to share life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388940**

31YR old male, wavy hair, GSOH, seeks female with similar interests for friendship and dating. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381935**

IVOR 49, likes sports, meals out, seeks female of similar age or younger. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381897**

SINCERE gent, 68, seeks lady, 50-60, intelligent with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381827**

MATURE OD seeks understanding mature woman for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381691**

CANTERBURY male, 56, medium build, loving, understanding, GSOH, varied interests, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379673**

GRAHAM 51, stocky, tanned, OHAC, likes a laugh, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381215**

PAUL 42, 6ft, dark hair/eyes, seeks younger female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381191**

MARK 62, reliable, trustworthy, varied interests, seeks understanding, romantic lady, 47-67 to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379809**

BILL late 50's, likes good wine, nights out, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380953**

TALL dark handsome male, 46, seeks female for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388512**

JIM 50, genuine, honest, kind, seeks female with similar values for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379659**

JOHN 61, reliable, tactile, understanding, varied interests, seeks romantic, down to earth, understanding, cuddly lady, 55-67. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379645**

PHILIP young 58, looking for N/S romantic, beautiful lady, under 50, any race for excitement, love, romance. Own home in France and England, love food and much more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379631**

MALE 58, widow, 5ft 8ins, cuddly, blue eyes, seeks female for company, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388448**

RICHARD 46, dark hair, blue eyes, 5ft 6ins, slim-medium build, likes holidays, cinema, countryside, meals out, walks, seeks genuine female for happy LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379313**

RICHARD dark hair, blue eyes slim-medium build, 5ft 6ins, likes holidays, theatre, beach walks, cinema, music, seeks female, 36-63 for happy LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381489**

IAN 51, 5ft 8ins, slightly disabled arm, seeks honest, caring female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388846**

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MALE seeks outgoing, sensual, tactile, mature female, 40-60. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388582**

TALL intelligent man, late 40's, fit, enjoys outdoors, meals out, seeking discreet female for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379877**

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ICE HOCKEY



Picture: DAVID TREVALLION

FEISTY: Dynamos (right) battled with Cardiff

League probes Mos-Devils clash

THE English Ice Hockey Association (EIHA) is investigating the fiery meeting between Invicta Dynamos and Cardiff ENL Devils which was abandoned last weekend.

A bad tempered game saw several fights between the sides on the ice, while a Devils player reportedly clashed with a supporter off it. The contest, which the Mos were winning 3-1, boiled over following a lengthy brawl and the officials then had difficulty moving all the players off the ice to have it resurfaced.

The game was called off when Cardiff refused to return and it will now be looked into by the EIHA. The league have a range of options at their disposal depending on their conclusions, including awarding the points to either team or having the game replayed behind closed doors.

The Mos' statement said the club regretted "the unsatisfactory conclusion of the fixture for both fans and players alike", while Mark Cuddihy, Cardiff's head coach, said the decision not to return to the ice had been taken because of "extraordinary circumstances."

The club are not in action again until January 7 and head into the new year fifth in the National League Division One South table, 10 points adrift of the top four.

Mos head coach Kevin Parrish, who was unable to comment on the Cardiff game, believes the squad are well capable of climbing the table.

He said: "We know we have the potential to be a very good team but that needs to turn into consistency."

FOOTBALL

Kedwell out to renew old battle against Crawley

By David Pritchard
david.pritchard@archant.co.uk

STRIKER Danny Kedwell is looking forward to playing the pantomime villain as Gillingham attempt to prove their promotion credentials against League Two leaders Crawley Town on Boxing Day.

While the majority of the Gills squad will never have played Crawley, their top scorer is expecting a spicy reaction from the Red Devils' fans.

The 28-year-old was part of the AFC Wimbledon side battling with Crawley for promotion from the Conference Premier last season. The West Sussex club also submitted a bid for Kedwell midway through the campaign, which was rejected by the Dons.

The forward has scored in his last three appearances against Crawley and is relishing an opportunity to add to his record.

"It's a horrible place, to be honest," he said. "They don't like me because of the bid last Christmas and it was turned down. There was a bit going on between [the Wimbledon] fans and their fans, so I probably won't get a good reception, but it brings the best out of me and they're one of the teams I like scoring against.

"It is a difficult place to go but I'm sure we have the quality in our side to go there and compete with them.

"Now we have our rhythm going and are on a good run, I don't think they'll be fancying it."

Gillingham go into the game full of confidence after crushing Bristol Rovers 4-1 last weekend. Kedwell scored two penalties to take his goalscoring tally for the season to nine, while the side's unbeaten run was stretched to eight games.

The decent record is dwarfed by Crawley, who have gone 15 games since last tasting defeat in September. It has allowed them to move four points clear at the top of the table and on course for a second successive league championship.

Town's deep pockets have been regarded with envy in many quarters, but Gills boss Andy Hessenthaler has plenty of respect for his opposite number, Steve Evans.

He said: "I know everybody talks about their budget, it's nothing to do with me but you can have all the money in the world but if you don't get the lads playing for you it won't get results, so Steve's built a good squad.

"They've kept their momentum going and all the credit goes to them at the moment, they're the team everybody wants to shoot at. Obviously we'll go there and try to do that."

A win would set the Gills up for a bumper festive points haul, with a trip to basement boys Dagenham & Redbridge and home game against an out of form Aldershot Town to follow.

The Gills trail Crawley by 11 points but Hessenthaler has faith they can be caught.

He said: "I believe so, we're not even halfway yet. I'm sure Steve knows there's a lot of work to be done yet and it's not unthinkable we couldn't catch them."

Skipper Andy Frampton (ankle) is a doubt, while Charlie Lee is suspended for two games. With Frank Nouble's loan expiring Jo Kuffour is likely to return alongside Kedwell up front.

Picture: ADY KERRY



FIERY: Danny Kedwell is expecting a lively reception at Crawley

GILLINGHAM'S FESTIVE FIXTURES

BOXING DAY:
Crawley Town (a)

DECEMBER 30:
Dagenham & Redbridge (a)

JANUARY 2:
Aldershot Town (h)

GOLF

Qualifying setback leaves Barham vowing to fulfil great expectations

AFTER suffering the pain of narrowly missing out on a European Tour card for next season Benn Barham has high hopes of making amends in the new year.

The Tenterden golfer looked on course for one of the 30 full cards on offer at the final stage of Qualifying School last week. He was in the top 15 after four of the six rounds in Spain, before fading over the last 36 holes to finish in 41st place.

It was a heartbreaking finish for Barham, who missed the start of the year as he recovered from having a kidney containing a tumour removed.

The ranking will give the 35-year-old limited access to the elite European Tour next year, but the majority of his golf will again be played on the Challenge Tour.



OPTIMISTIC: Benn Barham

Although it is not ideal, Barham is confident of making an impact when the season starts next month.

"It's still quite raw, the disappointment, but it's something I've got to get over," he said.

"This year was all about getting back on my feet and finding my form again. I played better than expected so my expectations are starting to rise a bit. Next year will be a good one because I'm playing well and back fit."

Barham was concerned before going to Spain how he would stand up physically to six rounds in as many days, but it was not a factor in his tumble down the leaderboard.

He said: "I felt I didn't really do much wrong. One shot I pitched the ball 131 yards instead of 133 and ended up going in the water and taking a triple bogey.

"I was absolutely gutted, I won't lie. I've got a great family around me but golf pays the bills, so it's tough to take."

CRICKET

Farbrace successor will not have room to make big changes to Kent squad

THE new Kent head coach will be expected to work with the squad already at the club, rather than have the freedom to make wholesale changes.

The process of finding a successor to Paul Farbrace was expected to finish this week, but an announcement was not made before this newspaper went to press.

Whoever takes over at the St Lawrence Ground will have a role to play in further acquisitions this winter, including the potential of an overseas player, but George Kennedy, Kent's chairman, insisted they will not be given a blank canvas to build a new squad.

He said: "We don't want a coach coming in and saying 'your entire squad are rubbish, we need to rebuild from scratch'.



AIMS: George Kennedy

"We think we have a very good youth policy with some very good guys coming through. So a coach isn't coming in with total and utter carte blanche to change everything, he'll have to coach what we've got and advise the way ahead."

Despite not having a head coach so far this winter the club have made progress with assembling their squad for next summer. Ben Harmison became their second new signing of the off-season, agreeing a deal on Monday to follow Michael Powell into the club.

The 25-year-old all-rounder, younger brother of former England seamer Steve Harmison, was released by Durham at the end of the summer.

Graham Johnson, Kent's chairman of cricket, said: "He has a point to prove about making the best of his undoubted ability and we look forward to helping him do that. I am sure that all involved with Kent will make him very welcome."

MOTOCROSS

Racing team's success helps charity put kids on right track

Impressive results in debut season provide a boost to a project working to change perceptions of motocross



TALENT: Ryan Matthews (above) finished second in his class this year as part of the MXCP team run by Ric Newton (below, centre)

By David Pritchard
david.pritchard@archant.co.uk

MOTOCROSS has a bad image in some quarters but a race team from Kent is helping to promote the work of an inspirational charity which uses the sport to help young people from underprivileged backgrounds.

For the past 11 years the Motocross Challenge Project (MXCP) has provided children aged 7-17 with a taste of the sport, combined with educational classes.

Based on a site in the hills above Dover, it has been hugely successful and now sees about 1,000 youngsters every year.

Ric Newton, who set up MXCP with his wife Charlotte in 2000, believes motocross is often misunderstood and can be a powerful tool to instill discipline and respect.

"In recent years it's had a bad press with easy access to mini motos and pit bikes which you can buy on the internet for a few hundred pounds, but they're ridden in the wrong way," he said.

"I think it's tarnished everyone and caused problems but I know why they want to ride. We don't want to stop kids getting involved with motorcycles, but we want to instill safety and respect.



"I think the way young people are now is so different to how it used to be. When I was 12 I could fix my own bike and care for it, now they just seem to care for their Playstation and have lost respect for things. I think this project helps because we also form a bond with the parents."

The charity works with the youngsters during the week and is funded by opening to the general public on Saturdays.

To spread MXCP's work, this year Newton, a former regional motocross champion, put together a race team for the first time. Made up of riders who had been introduced to the sport at their facility, the three-strong team exceeded expectations to claim two runners-up spots and a top-10 finish in the regional championship.

Ryan Matthews was one of the riders to finish second in his class. The 22-year-old from Ramsgate has a long history with MXCP, starting out as one of the first to come through the project before later returning as an instructor after being unable to find an apprenticeship after college.

He said: "It's a special place, the young people love it and it's great for self-confidence and building people up.

"With a six week course there's guys who come in with no confidence and by the end they're integrating with the rest and it just brings them on. The riding is the carrot, they do their educational stuff and then go out and ride."

Matthews will form part of the TryMotox.com team next year and hopes to go on and compete at a national level, which would provide a boost to MXCP's exposure.

Newton, 40, intends to announce the new team next month and believes there is the potential for it to enjoy plenty of success.

He said: "I have high hopes for Ryan and I'll support him as much as I can. With the other guys it'll be a chance to get them competing at a high level so they can move on to bigger things. There's a lot of young talent I've seen locally."

RUGBY UNION

Canterbury top of the class but other half-term reports say 'must do better'

THE county's rugby sides all have a three-week break over the festive period, but the mood in clubhouses across Kent will be contrasting after a mixed first half of the season.

Nowhere will be more jovial than Merton Lane, with Canterbury looking odds-on to win the National 3 London & SE title. A 34-15 win against nearest challengers Tonbridge Juddians last weekend extended their winning streak to an impressive 14 games.

Andy Pratt, the city club's head coach, said: "We're very pleased and couldn't have asked for a lot more. We set high standards and while the results have been good, some of the performances against teams near the bottom have been a bit sloppy. That's nit-picking, though."

TJs will still fancy their chances of at least finishing second to reach the play-offs and keep hopes of a fourth successive promotion intact.

Blackheath have bounced back from a slow start to the National 1 campaign to climb into the top six, but Westcombe Park head into the new year propping up National 2 South and will need an improvement in the new year to avoid tumbling through the trapdoor.

Relegation concerns will also trouble Deal & Betteshanger and Tunbridge Wells, who are both in London 2 South East's bottom three. Thanet Wanderers are also vulnerable after four wins in 14 London 1 South games.

There is plenty of optimism elsewhere, though, with Aylesford Bulls third in the division alongside another strong run in the Intermediate Cup.

Folkestone and Medway have made excellent starts to the London 3 South East campaign and the pair will resume in January as part of a three-way battle for the title with Crowborough.

Gillingham Anchorians lead the race for glory in Kent 1, just ahead of Vigo and Dartfordians.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO



ON THE UP: Canterbury have a 14-point lead

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL FOCUS WITH **FRED ATKINS**

Playing on the merry-go-round

"IT'S the final Non-League Football column of 2011 and if you've spent the last 12 months in a medically-induced coma there's good news and bad.

Kim Jong-il is dead, but Tulisa Contostavlos' career isn't. The News of the World has gone, but the Daily Mail's still here and, if you support a non-league team in Kent, you may struggle to recognise your own players.

One of the contradictions of the semi-pro game is that while its supporters tend to be more loyal than those who follow bigger clubs, players don't stay put for long.

The career of the average non-league footballer follows a predictable trajectory. At school, most were better than their peers and some will have been part of a professional youth set-up, but after failing to make the grade they either pack the game up or drift into non-league, typically playing for at least half a dozen progressively weaker clubs by the time they hit 30.

Looking at a starting line-up from 12 months ago and comparing it with the XI the same team started with last week demonstrates the transient nature of the non-league game, particularly when a manager leaves.

A year ago Dover were buoyant under Martin Hayes, having knocked Gillingham and Aldershot out of the FA Cup, but just two players who started their final game of 2010 began last Saturday's game at Staines.

There were only two survivors from Maidstone's 1-1 draw with Tooting last year at Worthing on Saturday and at Sittingbourne only three started under both Gary Abbott a year ago at Horsham YMCA and Joe Dowley last week against Burgess Hill.

Even at clubs with managerial stability there are multiple changes. A relatively consistent seven of the team that began Ebbsfleet's 2-1 win over Dartford on December 28 last year also started at Grimsby last week, but just four of the Darts starting XI that day played from the beginning against Dorchester.

Even allowing for injuries, suspensions and selection whims, the overall pattern is one of almost constantly evolving squads, in an environment where four-year deals are almost unheard of, there are no transfer windows and where players tend to follow managers around.

Many players will also be badly let down by clubs during their careers, usually over unpaid wages. Most fans understand this and few begrudge those good enough to earn a wage from the game the right to move on, even though they'd never consider switching allegiance themselves.

The fan-player dynamic is therefore a bit like a Katie Price marriage: passionate but slightly artificial and usually over in 12 months."

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